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Horse racing czar gets ax over misuse of gov't funds

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

MALACAÑANG HAS FIRED Philippine Racing Commission Chair Jaime A. Ollag in connection with the alleged malversation of millions of pesos in Philracom funds.

Executive Secretary

DILAG

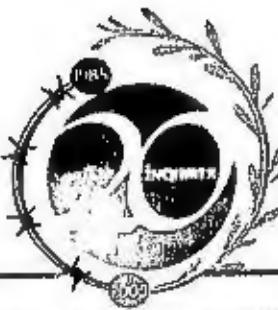
HORSE/A6

METRO/A17

LTFRB: No fare hike unless diesel prices hit P35/liter

NEWS/A2

Yap back in GMA Cabinet as PMS head


**PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER**
 BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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Shades of Marcos, SC says of GMA's 1017

Dispersal of rallies, arrests, raid illegal

 By Vincent Cabreza
 PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

IT EVOKED SHADES OF FERDINAND MARCOS' martial law edict.

The Supreme Court yesterday declared unconstitutional the arrests of protesters, the forcible breakup of rallies, and the raid on a newspaper office that were carried out by security forces in accordance with President Macapagal-Arroyo's proclamation declaring a state of emergency in February.

For full text of 1017 decision, log on to: http://www.inq7.net/verbatim/PP1017_05032006.pdf

Voting 11-3, the court upheld the power of Ms Arroyo to declare a state of emergency and call on the Armed Forces to sup-

press lawless violence under Presidential Proclamation No. 1017. At the same time, however, the tribunal ruled as illegal a clause in PP 1017 giving herself authority to issue decrees.

The latest ruling was the third

SHADES/A4

OUSTED President Joseph Estrada assists his mother, Mary Ejercito, on her wheelchair shortly upon arrival on Wednesday at his home in Greenhills, San Juan.

RAPPLER

Erap comes home for mom's 101st birthday

By Nelson F. Flores

AFTER FIVE YEARS IN detention, former President Joseph Estrada set foot for the first time on his home in San Juan to visit his 101-year-old mother happy birthday.

Inside the walled compound at No. 1 Polk St., North Greenhills, the ousted leader stood teary-eyed beside a glass door fronting a manicured but empty lawn, where friends and admirers used to pay him court.

Media people were not allowed in the house. Estrada, wearing his favorite gray jacket, arrived under police escort. He went straight to the house and stood beside the glass door next to the lawn.

"He paused for about a minute, sighed and, with teary eyes, said that it had been five

ERAP/A13



Velarde hits Cha-cha, supports Con-ass

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

CONSIDER CHARTER CHANGE through a constituent assembly—not through a signature campaign that is illegal and is nothing more than an attempt to grab power by those who stand to gain by it.

El Shaddai leader Bro. Mariano "Mike" Velarde yesterday said President Macapagal-Arroyo and leaders of the Senate

and the House could avoid a confrontation over the government-led people's initiative by agreeing to this formula.

Arroyo supporters are gathering signatures under the people's initiative to a single question to be answered by yes or no: Whether Filipinos agree to a shift from the bicameral presidential system to a unicameral parliament and whether they

VELARDE/A13

PRESIDENT Arroyo reads her papers before the start of a roundtable meeting in Malacañang on Wednesday.

Palace tells Senate: Mind your manners

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MALACAÑANG YESTERDAY TOLD the Senate to mind its manners, saying there was no cause for the chamber to blow its top over the no-show of two Cabinet officials and a bureau head at a hearing on Tuesday.

"We ask the Senate to observe inter-branch courtesy and refrain from harsh tongues that tend to place the executive [branch] in a bad light," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said.

Bunye said that the Palace had not been properly advised of the hearing of the Senate ways and means committee chaired by Sen. Ralph Recto, and that the agencies involved were "properly represented by highly capable officials."

Bunye denied that President Macapagal-Arroyo had given Finance Secretary Margarito Teves, Trade Secretary Peter Payila and Internal Revenue Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag a gag order.

"Cabinet officials can deal with matters at their level without involving the Chief Executive," he said.

Recto had earlier said that the

RP media pay 'high price for outspokenness'

By Alcina Papa

THERE CAN BE NO PRESS FREEDOM WHEN journalists live in conditions of corruption, poverty and fear, the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines said yesterday on World Press Freedom Day.

Jose Torres, NUJP spokesperson, said that "the ownership patterns of media... breed the often unjust and inhuman conditions our colleagues, especially in the provinces, have to toil under, conditions that make them prone to corruption and unethical conduct."

"These ownership patterns, in turn, lead to the erosion of public trust in media as harbingers of truth and the people's last resort against abuse. There can, indeed, be no press freedom when journalists continue to live in conditions of corruption and unethical conduct."

"We ask the Senate to observe inter-branch courtesy and refrain from harsh tongues that tend to place the executive [branch] in a bad light," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said.

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"Cabinet officials can deal with matters at their level without involving the Chief Executive," he said.

Recto had earlier said that the



DON'T kill journalists is the message from members of the Philippine media on World Press Freedom Day.

JOAN BONDOC

'We work from the shadows'


 By Tonette Orejas
 PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Seven years since Queen Elizabeth II bestowed on her the title of Member of the Order of the British Empire in 1999 for her humanitarian work among the Aeta people of Mt. Pinatubo, Jennifer Wallum is still at it, doing her part in endeavors where the tribes put their minds and hearts into.

"We work from the shadows,"

the 59-year-old Wallum said in an

interview on Thursday. She was referring to herself, her seven co-officers, nine trustees and members of the group she founded, the Entrepreneurs Volunteers Assistance Charity Foundation (EVACF).

The group taps donations in the Philippines and from across the globe, and raises revenues from gift items they help market, and its efforts have brightened up communities that seek help.

The latest was the resources

WE WORK/A6

Schirmer, 91: Marcos critic, Filipinos' friend

By Walden Bello

WHEN DANIEL BOONE SCHIRMER passed away in Cambridge, Massachusetts, last month, it felt like the end of an era for many of the people that participated in the movement against Ferdinand Marcos in the United States.

Boone, along with Severina Rivera Drew, Barbara Cort-Gaerlan and Tim and Linda McGloin, founded the Friends of the Fil-

ipino People in November 1973. Over the next 13 years, he became one of the best known US-based critics of the American policy of support for the Marcos regime.

Combining fierce determination with tremendous energy, Boone spoke at meetings and conferences throughout the United States, wrote articles demanding withdrawal of US bases from

SCHIRMER/A6

FORECAST: Northern Luzon and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening.

COMPILED BY CYRIL L. BONABENTE, PDI RESEARCH/05/04/06 SOURCE: PAGASA

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Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Mallorca	Partly Cloudy
Batangas	Partly Cloudy	Roos	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Lucena	Cloudy with Rain	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rain
Taytay	Partly Cloudy	Zambales	Cloudy with Rain
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rain
Catagon	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rain

Bro. Mike working anew to reconcile GMA, Erap

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

EL SHADAI LEADER BRO. Mariano "Mike" Velarde yesterday said he was pursuing reconciliation efforts between President Macapagal-Arroyo and her detained predecessor President Joseph Estrada, to resolve the present political crisis hounding the nation.

"It (reconciliation talks) is still going on and in fact it is what I am insisting on because it is easy to understand the root cause of our present political troubles. It all started when former President Estrada was stripped of his power without due process and you know that up to now people continue to support him, in fact majority of our people," Velarde said in a forum of the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines.

Unity covenant

"Estrada is anyway no longer interested in returning to power but he is willing to cooperate and put back to normalcy our Philippine conditions," said Velarde.

He said Estrada wanted to help the country by leading an "agricultural revolution" to solve the problem of hunger and poverty.

He said he had no reason to doubt Estrada's words.

"He's a man of his words," he said.

Velarde tried to broker a unity covenant between Ms Arroyo and Estrada



ARROYO

in August last year but it was scuttled at the last minute. Ms Arroyo and Estrada were to appear together to sign the covenant before a huge El Shaddai gathering at the Quirino Grandstand timed for Velarde's birthday.

Velarde revealed he was the one who convinced Estrada to abandon Malacañang at the height of the EDSA II people power revolt to avoid bloodshed.

"And as you know I really stood with him up to the last hour and I have stood with him before even (before there could be) bloodshed during that so-called EDSA Dos revolution," Velarde said.

"I was the one who personally convinced him to get out of the palace during that day. I told him at least you're



ESTRADA

the only president without blood in your hands and he willingly left the palace," he added.

He said he continued talking to Estrada since then.

"My only desire, Brother Mike, is to really have my name cleared and be set free and be able to help our country, not necessarily returning to power. That's what he told me and I believe him," Velarde said.

Velarde said some hardliners in Ms Arroyo's camp are the stumbling blocks to the reconciliation.

"That's how I see it although their line of reasoning which I think is legitimate is that they could not interfere with the existing court action which I am not insisting to do away with, it

should push through and it should be resolved by the Sandiganbayan," he said.

Velarde was vague on how Ms Arroyo could guarantee Estrada's wish to clear his name as he acknowledged the President could not interfere with the courts.

Meeting of minds

"What the President can do really is pave the way for a meeting of the minds," he said.

"You know perhaps on the side of Erap, (he) can assure the President that there will be no chaos that will happen once he's out and on the part of the President what she can do really is comply with what is in the agreement," Velarde said.

He said there must be some compromises otherwise the two sides could not come to an agreement.

Velarde indicated his belief that Estrada was not guilty of plunder for which he is undergoing trial.

"(In) the case against Erap the penalty is death and according to our laws when the penalty is death the question must be resolved beyond any reasonable doubt and gauging from the course of hearings and investigations there were some kind of doubts that's coming up," Velarde said.

Velarde expressed optimism the reconciliation effort would soon bear fruit.

"The effort is still going on. I'm still working on it and I think we can reach an agreement in time," Velarde said. Asked when, he said: "I would not speculate but miracles do happen."

Yap rejoins Cabinet as PMS chief

By Gil C. Cabacungan

NEARLY A YEAR AFTER RESIGNING from the Cabinet due to tax evasion charges filed against his family, former Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap is now back in the corridors of power of Malacañang as head of the Presidential Management Staff.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita announced Yap's appointment as PMS chief (the gatekeeper of the President's papers) yesterday saying the former student of President Macapagal-Arroyo would retain his post as presidential adviser on jobs creation.

Yap will replace Renato Velasco who became PMS chief a little over a month ago when the post was left vacant by Rigoberto Tiglao who was named Philippine ambassador to Greece.

Velasco, who has been associated with the President since her days in the Senate, has been appointed chair of the PNOC-Petrochemical Development Corp.

Yap was forced to resign in June last year shortly after the Bureau of Internal Revenue filed tax evasion charges against a real estate firm owned by his family.

The suit was dismissed in October by the Department of Justice for lack of evidence. In December last year, Yap was tapped by the President to oversee her program to create 1.5 million jobs a year.

Yap's re-entry into the Cabinet injects more youth into the Arroyo Cabinet which appears to have gotten over the abrupt resignation of the so-called Hyatt 10, a group of Cabinet officials and government executives last year.

A few months ago, the President appointed the youthful Michael Defensor as Presidential Chief of Staff and former Rep. Rolando Andaya as Budget Secretary.

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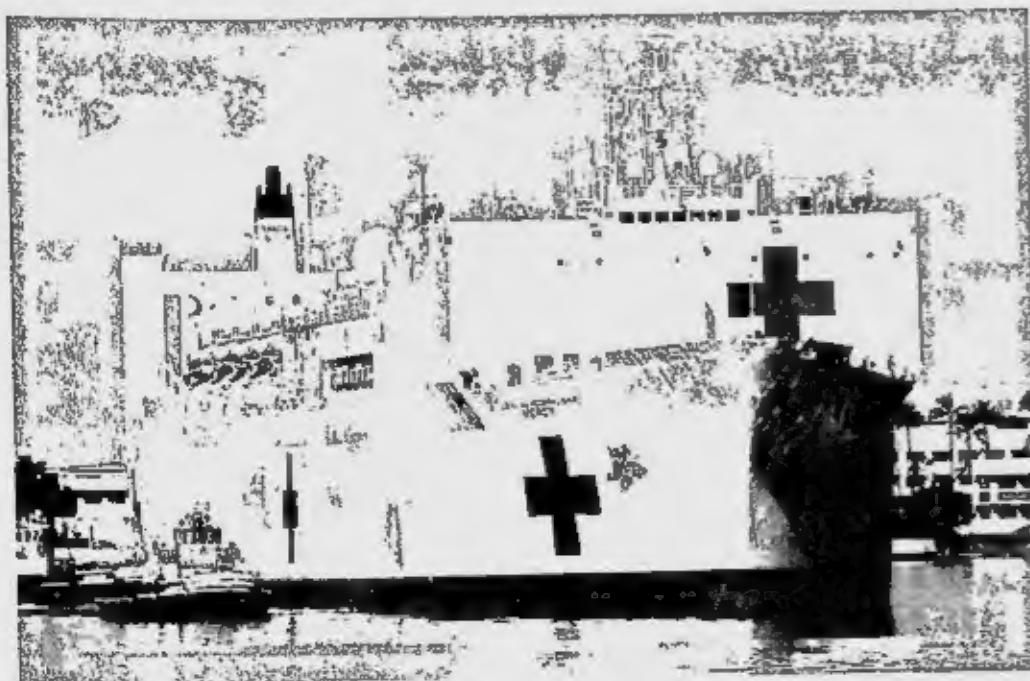
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THE US Naval hospital ship, USNS Mercy arrives to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, Tuesday. The Mercy arrived in Hawaii en route to a five-month humanitarian mission to the Philippines and other points in Southeast Asia.

US hospital ship sails off on mission to RP

PEARL HARBOR, Hawaii—The US Navy hospital ship USNS Mercy arrived in Hawaii on Tuesday en route to a five-month humanitarian mission to the Philippines and other points in Southeast Asia.

The trip follows the white hulled vessel's voyage to Indonesia last year to treat victims of the December 2004 tsunami.

"It's a demonstration of our interest, our commitment to helping people in the region," said Adm. Gary Roughead, US Pacific Fleet commander. "It's going to areas where the assistance is needed."

The mission comes as the United States military strives to improve its image in the Philippines, Indonesia and other countries Washington considers critical to its efforts to combat terrorism.

Earlier this year, the United States donated \$11 million worth of

hospital equipment to the Indonesian armed forces.

The Navy hopes to arrange for the Mercy to visit Indonesia on the current trip, but plans to do so have not been completed.

Hundreds of doctors and nurses from nongovernmental organizations—both American and from the countries the Mercy will be visiting—plan to join the mission.

Dr. Ramon K. Sy, president of Honolulu-based Aloha Medical Mission, said advanced facilities aboard the Mercy would enable his doctors to offer patients a higher level of medical care.

Capt. Gail L. Hathaway said she looked forward to following up on the work she did during the Mercy's tsunami relief mission.

"There's plenty of leftover work. We took care of the most important things that would touch the

latest technology."

The ship boasts four X-ray rooms, a CAT scan unit and a dental surgery suite among other equipment.

The Mercy will go to the southern Philippines—an area Aloha Medical Mission has not been able to visit in the past because of the dangers posed by the decades-long secessionist war being waged by Filipino Islamic insurgents.

Navy public health experts will pay close attention to the quality of the drinking water in the areas they visit and monitor for tropical diseases such as malaria and dengue fever.

Capt. Gail L. Hathaway said she looked forward to following up on the work she did during the Mercy's tsunami relief mission.

"There's plenty of leftover work. We took care of the most important things that would touch the

most people. So now we can go back and add to what we did," said Hathaway, an officer with the Navy Environmental Preventive Medicine Unit 6 based at Pearl Harbor.

Last year, the Mercy treated more than 107,000 patients, performed 466 surgeries and carried out 6,900 dental procedures in Indonesia, East Timor and Papua New Guinea.

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Wage boards blamed for workers' plight

By Michael Lim Ubac

LEGISLATORS YESTERDAY blamed the tripartite wages and productivity boards for the government's glaring failure to alleviate the plight of the working class in the country for the last 16 years.

House Deputy Majority Leader Antonio Cerilles of Zamboanga del Sur and Rep. Douglas Cagas of Davao del Sur sought the review of Republic Act No. 6727 amid charges by labor groups that regional wage boards had become "pro-capitalist" and insensitive to workers' plight.

The law, otherwise known as the Wage Rationalization Act enacted on July 25, 1988, provided for the creation of the regional wage boards to determine and fix the minimum wage rates in the various regions.

The two lawmakers are members of the House committee on labor and employment.

Cerilles and Cagas said Congress should re-assess the relevance of the law since wage boards only granted token increases in wages and allowances over the years, thereby failing to mitigate the impact of the rising prices of commodities and cost of services on workers and their families.

On Tuesday, House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles and Rep. Roseller Barinaga pushed for a legislated wage hike despite President Macapagal-Arroyo's statement on Labor Day leaving it up to regional wage boards to decide on the workers' demand for across-the-board pay hikes.

Both supported House Bill No. 345, principal authored by Anak-pawis party-list Rep. Crispin Beltran, seeking a P125 daily pay hike for private employees and a P3,000 increase in the monthly salaries of state workers.

Cerilles said a review of RA 6727 was intended to improve the board's performance.

marie france

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Shades of Marcos, SC says of GMA's 1017

From page A1

slap on Ms Arroyo by the tribunal. The court earlier struck down portions of Ms Arroyo's Executive Order No. 464, which barred government officials from testifying in congressional inquiries without her clearance. It also voided Ms Arroyo's calibrated preemptive response (CPR) policy, which police had used to disperse demonstrations.

In its harshest criticism of PP 1017, the court assailed the similarity between Ms Arroyo's edict and late dictator Marcos' Proclamation No. 1081, which imposed martial law in 1972.

How they voted

FOURTEEN OF THE 15 SC justices participated in the decision. Senior Associate Justice Reynato S. Puno was on leave.

Justice Angelina Sandoval Gutierrez's 73-page decision was concurred in by 10 justices—Chief Justice Artemio V. Panganiban, Justices Leonardo A. Quisumbing, Consuelo Ynares-Santiago, Antonio T. Carpio, Ma. Alicia Austria-Martinez, Conchita Carpio-Morales, Romeo J. Callejo Sr., Adolfo S. Azcuna, Minita V. Chico-Nazario and Cancio C. Garcia.

Both Panganiban and Santiago wrote separate concurring opinions. The Chief Justice's concurring opinion was joined by Carpio, Carpio-Morales, and Callejo Sr.

Justice Dante O. Tinga's dissenting opinion was joined by Justices Renato C. Corona and Presbitero J. Velasco Jr.

"We all know that it was PP 1081 which granted President Marcos legislative power. Its enabling clause states: 'To enforce obedience to all the laws and decrees, orders and regulations promulgated by me personally or upon my direction,'" said the 73-page majority decision penned by Associate Justice Angelina Sandoval-Gutierrez.

"The enabling clause of PP 1017 issued by President Arroyo is to enforce obedience to all the laws and to all decrees, orders and regulations promulgated by me personally and upon my direction," it noted.

"This court rules that the assailed PP 1017 is unconstitutional insofar as it grants President Arroyo the authority to promulgate 'decrees.'

Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban, who voted with the majority, warned that authors of PP 1017 "may be testing the outer limits of presidential prerogatives and the perseverance of this court in safeguarding the people's constitutionally enshrined liberty."

"They are playing with fire and, unless prudently restrained, they may one day unwittingly or unwittingly burn down the country."

Panganiban said history would not "forgive this court if it allows such misadventure."

The decision said PP 1017 did not justify the imposition of warrantless arrests, the breakup of street rallies, the raid on the office of The Daily Tribune and prior restraint on the press.

Lawless violence

"The warrantless arrests of Randolph S. David and Ronald Llamas; the dispersal and warrantless arrest of the KMU and the Naufto-KMU members during the rallies, in the absence of proof that [they] were committing acts constituting lawless violence ... the

Tribune editor bails high court ruling

By Alcuin Papa, Michael Lim
Ubac and Christine Awendario

THE EDITOR IN CHIEF OF THE Daily Tribune hailed the Supreme Court decision on Proclamation 1017 as a victory not only for her newspaper but for the entire media industry as well.

reconsideration would be filed. "In a way, we are glad that, at least, the high court decision affirmed the government's inherent right to protect itself, and the President's power under the Constitution to call out the Armed Forces as its Commander-in-Chief to prevent or suppress lawless violence," Bunye said.

Opposition lawmakers said the court's decision bolstered their claim that Ms Arroyo had dictatorial leanings and vowed to use the ruling as an ammunition to seek her impeachment.

• Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan: "The acts that flowed from the proclamation have been declared illegal and rightly so ... This should serve as a stern warning to all that, as public officials, we must act within the confines of the rule of law and the Constitution."

• Sen. Rodolfo Biazon: "If I were the victims, I would file charges against those who carried these out—from the agents all the way up to the Cabinet security cluster."

• Sen. Panfilo Lacson: "The Supreme Court acted correctly." With a report from Philip C. Tubesa

• Minority Leader Francis Escudero: "For the third time we have been proven correct in our assertion that Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has abused her powers ... This also proves, as we have said, the dictatorial tendencies of GMA."

• House Deputy Minority Leader Roilo Golez: "The Supreme Court once again struck down Malacañang's dic-

imposition of standards on media or any form of prior restraint on the press, as well as the warrantless search of Tribune offices and the whimsical seizure of its articles for publication and other materials, are declared unconstitutional."

The high court said PP 1017 "is constitutional insofar as it constitutes a call by President Macapagal-Arroyo on the AFP to prevent or suppress lawless violence."

"However, the provisions of PP 1017 commanding the AFP to enforce laws not related to lawless violence as well as decrees promulgated by the President are declared unconstitutional," the court said.

The court also said that while

the provision in PP 1017 declaring a state of national emergency under Article VII of the Constitution was constitutional, "such declaration does not authorize the President to take over privately owned utilities or business affected with public interest without prior legislation."

Article VII provides that the President shall have control of the executive department and shall ensure the laws are faithfully executed.

The decision also said that General Order No. 5—which the security forces used to implement the emergency proclamation—is constitutional since it provides a

standard by which the AFP and the Philippine National Police should implement PP 1017.

Acts of terrorism'

But the tribunal struck down a part of GO No. 5 relating to "acts of terrorism" since, it said, such acts had not yet been defined and made punishable by the legislature.

"Such portion of GO No. 5 is declared unconstitutional," it said.

Ms Arroyo issued PP 1017 on Feb. 24 to foil what Malacañang said was a plot by military and communist rebels to unseat her, involving an alleged possible attack on Malacañang.

"One of the misfortunes of an

emergency, particularly that which pertains to security, is that military necessity and the guaranteed rights of the individual are often not compatible," the court said.

"All that the arresting officers could invoke [in David's arrest during the Feb. 24 Edsa rally] was their observation that some rallyists were wearing T-shirts with the invective 'Oust Gloria Now' and their erroneous assumption that David was the leader of their political enemies."

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SMALL boat takes a freezer containing the bodies of dead Chinese fishermen.

Navy to probe attack on Sino boat

THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT HAS ASKED THE Philippines to investigate an attack on a Chinese fishing boat in disputed waters in the South China Sea which left four crewmen dead, and Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said the Philippine Navy was conducting the investigation.

The Department of Foreign Affairs said that Chinese consular officials had told it they were uncertain of the nationality of the attackers or their vessel as it "had no flag or identifying marks."

But the Chinese paper Southern Daily reported that last Thursday's attack on the Jinghai 03012 in the disputed Spratly Islands could have been carried out by a Filipino vessel. It did not say how it came to that conclusion.

Philippine Navy spokesman Capt. Geromino Melaban said the navy had no boats in the area.

The Southern Daily quoted a survivor as saying that a Philippine boat was behind the attack, and that "six of (the attackers) wore camouflage clothes while the other seven were casually dressed."

"The attack appeared to be organized," the report said.

The Jinghai 03012 has since returned to its home base on China's southern Hainan island with three wounded crew members in stable condition.

Ermita said that the Navy was investigating but cautioned against assuming quickly that the attackers were Filipinos.

Very good relations

"The Chinese themselves said they are still verifying the details of the incident," Ermita said.

"We have very good relations with the People's Republic of China," Ermita added. "It is only right that we do the best we can to ensure that things are righted, if indeed there are things done by our nationals."

Political and security analyst Rommel Banlaoi, a Spratlys expert, said the attack was "a piracy issue" rather than a state territorial conflict.

Banlaoi said pirates from Indonesia, Malaysia and the southern Philippines are known to attack ships in the area, and no one should immediately assume that the attackers were Filipinos.

"The South China Sea is a major flash point and reports like this could trigger conflict," Banlaoi said.

The Spratlys are a chain of more than 100 small islands or reefs that are believed to sit atop vast mineral deposits. They are claimed partially or entirely by Brunei, China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Malaysia and the Philippines.

All claimants are governed by a code of conduct to maintain the status quo and avoid actions that could incite armed confrontation in the area.

AFP with a report from Christine O. Avendaño

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, May 4, 2006

3rd Week of Easter

1st Reading: Acts 8:26-40

Gospel: John 6:44-51

Jesus addressed the crowd, "No one can come to me unless he is drawn by the Father who sent me; and I will raise him up on the last day. It has been written in the Prophets: They shall all be taught by God. So whoever listens and learns from the Father comes to me."

"For no one has seen the Father except the One who comes from God; he has seen the Father. Truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life."

"I am the bread of life. Though your ancestors ate the manna in the desert, they died. But here you have the bread which comes from heaven so that you may eat of it and not die."

"I am the living bread which has come from heaven; whoever eats of this bread will live forever. The bread I shall give is my flesh and I will give it for the life of the world."

Commentary

Philip becomes a preacher/missionary and converts an Ethiopian. Sitting with him and explaining the book of Isaiah, he connects it to Jesus crucified and risen. Along the way (in imitation of Jesus giving understanding and revealing himself along the way), he baptizes the man. Then the Spirit snatches Philip away and he finds himself somewhere else!

If we share insight and the meaning of the Scriptures with others, and reveal the face of God in Jesus to others, we are taught by God and know something of the eternal life of God.

Claretian Publications Inc., 8 Mayumi St., UP Village, Diliman, Quezon City, UP P.O. Box 4, Diliman, 1101 Quezon City; Tel.: 921-3984; Fax: 921-7429; E-mail: eccl@claret.org; Websites: <http://www.bible.claret.org> (Claretian Publications Inc.) & <http://missions.claret.org> (Claretians in the Philippines)

J.Y. Campos is dead; 84

JOSE YAO CAMPOS, FOUNDER AND CHAIR emeritus of United Laboratories Inc., the Uni lab Group of Companies and Greenfield Group of Companies, died on May 1 at the age of 84.

He is survived by wife Beatrice; children Joy, Butch and Ollie, Jeffrey, and Elizabeth; and grandchildren Clinton and Jacqueline, Chrissy, Mikey, Jeanette, Jaclyn and Luke, Jay, Janelle, Jamie, and Niña.

Campos was one of the trusted cronies of former President Ferdinand Marcos. He helped finance Marcos' election campaigns and set up Independent Realty Corp., the flagship company of the strongman's business empire.

Other companies organized by Campos for the Marcoses were Prime Holdings Corp., Master Assets Corp., Nova Properties Inc., Century Wealth Group, Performance Investment Corp., Anchor Estate Inc., Oesco Timber Inc., Universal Holdings Corp., Universal Silk Corp., Earthcore Holdings Corp., Trans Oriental Holdings Corp., and San Mariano Mining Corp.

In return, Marcos gave government sup-

port to Yao's companies, including Unilab, which was put up in 1953 and became one of Asia's largest pharmaceutical firms.

When Marcos was still a congressman, Campos enlisted his help in getting dollars needed to import medicines and chemicals. Later on, Unilab accounted for at least 80 percent of government medicine purchases.

After Marcos' ouster in 1986, Campos surrendered IRC and other dummy corporations to the Presidential Commission on Good Government as part of a compromise agreement. All in all, he handed over P250 million in cash, 197 certificates of title covering 1,650 hectares of land all over the Philippines, and shares of stocks in 27 corporations worth billions of pesos. His actions granted him immunity from criminal and civil charges.

Campos was able to keep Unilab, after proving that Marcos did not have a single share of stock in the company. The Campos family's real estate firm Greenfields Development Corp. built Manila Southwoods Golf and Country Club, Hillsborough Subdivision and the Edsa Central Shopping Complex. PDI Research



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Fil-Canadians raise race issue in boy's ordeal

From page A1

When the child's mother phoned the school to complain, the principal justified the action because "your son eats like a pig," the reports said.

The mother and other parties outraged by the incident said the child's way of eating—filling a spoon by pushing the food on his plate with fork—was "the traditional Filipino way," an expression of his native culture that was supposedly welcome in a free society.

Complaints filed

At a briefing yesterday, DFA spokesperson Gilberto Asuque said the Philippine Embassy in Ottawa led by Ambassador Jose Brillantes was supporting the complaint lodged by the mother at the local school board, the Commission Sociale Marguerite Bourgeoys.

He said another complaint filed in behalf of the 7-year-old boy by the Center for Research Action on

Race Relations (CRARR) "nationalized the issue."

Asuque said the CRARR, a Montreal-based nonprofit organization defending victims of discrimination on account of race, religion, ethnic roots or nationality, was seeking moral damages in its complaint against the teacher.

"The embassy considers this an affront to Philippine culture and continues to vigorously support any action that will validate a conclusion of racial discrimination," he said.

Also rallying behind the boy and his mother are members of the Philippine Association of Montreal, Asuque said.

'Yucky and disgusting'

The teacher punished the boy "more than 10 times this year" by ordering him to eat at a table by himself, away from his classmates, The Chronicle reported.

The teacher, who was unidenti-

fied in the report, serves as the "lunch monitor" for the boy's class.

The mother discovered her son's ordeal on April 11 when, at the family kitchen table, he said, "Mommy, I don't want to eat anymore. My teacher is telling me that eating with a spoon and fork is yucky and disgusting."

The boy said that when he ate with a spoon and fork instead of only one utensil, the teacher would move him to a table to sit by himself, The Chronicle reported.

The mother, a contract worker originally from Misamis Oriental who migrated to Montreal in 1999, phoned the school principal two days later to complain.

The reply coming from the principal, identified by The Chronicle as Normand Bergeron, further shocked the mother and nearly drove her to tears: "Madame, you are in Canada. Here in Canada, you should eat

the way Canadians eat."

The paper was quoting Bergeron per the mother's account of the phone conversation.

"If your son eats like a pig, he has to go to another table because this is the way we do it and how we're going to do it every time," the principal was further quoted as saying.

'Prejudiced and racist'

"I find it very prejudiced and it's racist. He (Bergeron) is supposed to be acting like a professional," the paper quoted the mother as saying.

"This is supposed to be a free country with free expressions of culture and religion. This is how we eat; we eat with a fork and spoon," she said.

The mother runs a daycare service in her Roxboro home and is close to completing her studies in early childhood education, the report added.

Horse racing czar gets ax over misuse of gov't funds

From page A1

Eduardo Ermita yesterday confirmed the dismissal of Dilag who had been the subject of a lengthy investigation by the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission (PAGC).

"We had previously suspended Dilag upon the recommendation of the PAGC. But this was later upgraded to dismissal. So we had to let him go," Ermita told the Inquirer.

He promised to give a copy of the PAGC report, but no such report was made available at press time.

Sources close to the PAGC investigation said Dilag had been depositing in his private bank accounts the excess in prize money that the Philracom had raised from private sponsors of big stakes races.

According to the same sources, the excess in prize money, running into millions of pesos raised by Philracom, should have been deposited in the commission's bank account.

They said the PAGC had ruled that Dilag's action constituted

theft of public funds.

According to the sources, the PAGC also rejected the explanation of Dilag that what he had been doing was considered normal practice by his predecessors at the Philracom.

The Palace yesterday said PAGC Chair Constance P de Guzman would hold today a press conference where she would announce details of the investigation of Dilag as well as Salvacion M. Buiat, administrator of the National Dairy Authority.

Last year, a case was filed against Dilag in connection with his alleged violations of Republic Act No. 3019 (The Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act), Republic Act No. 6713 (The Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials) and the Revised Penal Code's articles pertaining to malversation and illegal use of public funds.

Dilag was appointed by President Macapagal-Arroyo for a four-year term in 2002.

Schirmer, 91: Marcos critic, Filipinos' friend

From page A1

the Philippines, lobbied the US Congress to cut off aid to Marcos, and managed the Cambridge-Goddard College program on US-PR relations.

He was a friend and comrade of Filipino activists from all points of the political spectrum.

At their residence at 17 Gerry St. in Cambridge, Boone and his wife and lifelong political partner, Peggy, also played hosts to visitors from the Philippines seeking his views and advice, like Sister Mariam Dimarahan, Senators Jose W. Diokno and Benigno Aquino Jr., Dodong Nemenzo, Randy David, Ed de la Torre, Chariot Planas and Roland Simbulan.

His visitors invariably became his lifelong friends.

Perhaps the greatest irony of Boone's life was provided by the contrast between his anti-imperialist politics and his name. He got it from his great-great-uncle, the famous frontiersman and "Indian fighter" Daniel Boone, who played a key role in the westward expansion of the United States.

In typical fashion, he took this "contradiction" in stride and joked about it.

Love affair

Boone's love affair with the Philippines, according to his daughter Audrey, began when he decided to go back to school at Boston University in the 1960s.

With the protests against the Vietnam War in full swing, he discovered the earlier protest movement, led by Mark Twain and the Anti-Imperialist League, against the annexation and invasion of the Philippines at the turn of the century.

His study of fin de siecle (end of the century) US-PR relations led to a Ph.D. dissertation that was

later published under the title "Republic or Empire: American Resistance to the Philippine War."

That book revealed the main-spring of Boone's activism: Like Twain's earlier generation of anti-imperialists, he believed that the United States could not be a truly democratic republic unless it renounced its imperial pretensions.

Activist commitment

Boone's involvement with the Philippine struggle was his second major political engagement in a lifetime of activist commitment.

As a young student at Harvard University during the Depression years in the 1930s, Boone was a key figure in the radical student movement.

After serving in the US Army in the Italian campaign during World War II, Boone returned home and served as a key organizer of the Communist Party of the United States (CPUSA) in the New England area.

"He even ran as a candidate in Vermont on the CPUSA ticket, though I forget for what office," Audrey recalls.

With McCarthyism engulfing the United States in the early '50s, Boone was forced to go underground. For four years, he would have only irregular contacts with his family.

Fortunately, Peggy, also a CPUSA member, had a full-time job, so that "although we were poor, we always had something to eat," says Audrey.

It was a trying time for the family.

The Catholic Church in Roxbury, Massachusetts, where the Schirmers resided for a while, "told the schoolchildren not to play with the children of the communists," recalls his other daughter, Abbie.

Abbie also remembers when the Boston police came to confiscate the books that the family stored in the attic after the CPUSA bookstore in the city was forced to shut down.

"My brother Joseph spit at the police from our second floor porch when they left with the books," she says.



DANIEL Boone and wife Peggy: They opened their home in Cambridge, Massachusetts, to Filipino freedom fighters, including Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr.

ter, Abbie. "But they did, anyway."

Abbie also remembers when the Boston police came to confiscate the books that the family stored in the attic after the CPUSA bookstore in the city was forced to shut down.

"My brother Joseph spit at the police from our second floor porch when they left with the books," she says.

All radicals

Boone was arrested in 1954 under the repressive Smith Act but was released after spending two weeks in jail.

McCarthyism was waning in the late '50s, but another crisis hit the ranks of the CPUSA when the horrors of the Stalin period were revealed by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union after the death of the dictator.

Boone gradually disengaged from the CPUSA, but, says Audrey, "he never became bitter about his years with the party like many others did. For him and Mom, you just kept going, you just had to keep on struggling."

Abbie adds: "He and Mom had a great influence on us children. We were a close family. We all be-

came radicals, though we were doing different things. And I guess it helped that we went to a summer camp where we met other kids of parents who were also subjected to McCarthyist persecu-

tion."

High point

Probably the high point of Boone's political life occurred in 1991, when the Philippine Senate voted to end the tenure of US bases in the country—a goal he had campaigned hard for.

The next year saw him honored by the Philippine Senate, along with Senators Jovito Salonga and Wigberto Tañada, for their influence on that historic vote.

But Boone was disappointed with the major foreign policy moves of the new democratic government following the withdrawal of the bases.

The 1998 US-RP Visiting Forces Agreement signed by the Estrada administration allowed the US government to reintroduce a large military presence in the country in the guise of engaging in military exercises.

Another blow was the Arroyo administration's endorsement of the US invasion of Iraq in 2003 and its participation in the so-called "Coalition of the Willing."

As he entered his twilight years, Boone the historian moved to ensure that future scholars would have access to his vast number of books and research material.

He donated part of his private collection of 4,000 books and numerous papers to the University of the Philippines' Third World Studies Center, though, son Joseph recalls, "he objected when the center wanted to name the collection after him,

saying it should be named after the Filipino hero Apolinario Mabini."

Other parts of the collection went to the De La Salle University in the Philippines and two US universities.

True patriot

But until the end Boone remained a political activist.

The letter nominating him for the Lifetime Achievement Award of the Association of Asian American Studies, which he received in March 2004, noted: "Now, almost 90 years old, frail and having survived a hip replacement operation and two recent bouts of pneumonia, Boone continues to speak out against and write about the US wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

"Adamantly opposed to US militarist policies throughout the world, Boone wrote in a recent article, 'The present Bush administration represents the most extensive and heavily armed empire in history. America's economic capacity gives it influence that is nearly global in entirety. Guarding this is an unparalleled military establishment of global reach and frightful nuclear potential. Under cover of the war on terrorism, Washington carries on its hegemonic policy ... It is attempting to reestablish its military domination ... as a stepping stone for US military intervention in Asia and the Middle East.'

"Spoken like a true American patriot."

A few months after Boone received this honor, Peggy passed away on Aug. 8, 2004.

Boone died in his sleep last April 21, surrounded by their children.

The author is a professor of sociology at the University of the Philippines and currently a visiting professor of sociology at the University of California at Irvine.

'We work from the shadows'

From page A1

the group had pooled so that 36 Aeta and Dumagat communities could assemble and plan ways to make their Traditional Tribal Origins Ethnic Education Schools (TOES) fully work for some 3,000 children and hundreds more adult learners.

In six months, the cash, goods and services trickled in, enabling first Aeta law graduate Wyda Cosme, Aeta teacher Gennie Panguelo, Dumagat volunteer teacher Juliet Torres, tribal chief Ruben Sison and 80 other educators and community leaders to gather for workshops on April 26-28 at the Social Action Center of Pampanga.

The participants identified the limitations that hinder their work. Guests involved in development work taught techniques on how to sustain the TOES the tribes built in their villages.

Hearing them thresh out problems, plot out actions, and articulate hopes that every Aeta or Dumagat child in their villages will get an education and help their peoples overcome ignorance and poverty indicated their seriousness to attain those goals and protect their ethnic identity, Wallum said.

Leaders found the last under-

nous Peoples and the Department of Education had no funds for it, NCIP regional director Salong Sunggod said.

Pumice stone

Wallum's 15 years of working with the Aeta and other indigenous peoples (IPs) began with a pumice stone.

She was then a volunteer with the Enfant et Development's Philippine program, the Information Nutrition Action (INA).

When Mount Pinatubo erupted in June 1991, a fellow volunteer, Dr. Chi Nguyen, walked into the office all covered in ash. The doctor clasped Wallum's hand and placed a pumice stone that was still warm.

"Jennifer, you've got to do something for these people. You've got to find something for them to do," was what she remembered of that encounter.

"I devised this very simple project [involving] bags and gathering pumice," she said of the first social marketing work under the INA.

Not only did the stone earn money for the gatherers and the bag makers in what were then called "tent cities."

The screen-printing of

Pinatubo motifs, as well as the collecting of stones, helped "because it was a therapy to work

Emergency

The EVACF's involvement in education began with an emer-

gency in 1995 when government funds for Aeta scholars ran out.

As of September last year, at least 28 Aeta, two Dumagat, one Abelling and one Ifugao finished college.

Cosme, the first Aeta law graduate, served her Zambales village as an educator before moving on to the Clark Development Corp. as a legal analyst.

Aki Cosme, Gilbert Cuero, Jefferson Carino and the rest lent help as "activators" (or volunteer teachers) in adult literacy classes.

The group is still sending to college at least 28 students from six IP groups.

The TOES started in 2000 when the students of Alice Buckley, wife of an Australian ambassador, raised funds for her charity project in the Philippines on United Nations Day.

When Buckley came to Wallum to ask how to spend the money of students at the Narrabundah College in Canberra, the NCIP's Rose Bistroong jumped in and said, "Schools!"

The donation went to build the first TOES in Orion, Bataan.

IP-sensitive schools

"The Aeta enjoy learning. Many Aeta communities with activists then started asking the NCIP and the EVACF for help in educating their children. They pointed out

that children had no schools within walking distance or had to walk so far that they were too tired to study," Wallum said.

They recounted how their school children were mocked for their poverty and physical appearance. Aeta leaders also objected to lessons being taught that belittled Aeta beliefs, traditions and knowledge," she said.

UN: RP will remain poor unless...

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE UNITED NATIONS POPULATION Fund (UNFPA) said yesterday that the Philippines would remain an impoverished nation unless it found a more effective way to curb the rapid growth of its population. Moreover, the government was liable to charges of violating human rights if it did not provide the public access to all types of family planning methods.

Dr Zahidul Huque, the UNFPA's representative in the Philippines, sounded the warnings at a news conference during the 1st International Conference on Reproductive Health Management.

"We need to address reproductive health issues squarely to achieve our medium-term development goals," Huque said, citing the "demographic bonus" achieved by Brazil and some countries in Asia that managed their population growth in the 1980s.

In the Philippines, he said, a "host of disparities" in the agriculture and health sectors as well as in the education were contributing to slow economic development.

"We need to address them, (and) population should be the No. 1 priority," he said.

Aurora Gov. Bellaflor Angara-Castillo, speaking at the same news conference, urged local governments to take the lead.

"The national government is dilly-dallying," she said. "It's about time that local governments stepped in. It's much easier because we know the needs of our constituents. We know how to strategize."

Kidnap rise due to laxity, says solon

By Michael Lim
Ubac

THE SHARP RISE IN kidnappings for ransom during the first four months of the year shows laxity among the police, who have focused recently on guarding against coup plots and antigovernment protests as well as setting up checkpoints on city streets, Parañaque Rep. Eduardo Zialcita said yesterday.

He said he was alarmed by the 70-per-cent increase in kidnappings from January to April compared to the same period last year.

He told the Inquirer by telephone that he intended to write Philippine National Police chief Arturo Lomibao to ask him to reassess the anti-kidnapping drive and reorganize the National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force, which of late has been conducting checkpoints at night instead of going after kidnappers.

"First, it must reorganize its antikidnapping task force, if needed, and provide enough resources to make it a lethal force," Zialcita said in a statement earlier.

Vila-Ang, 50

ELIZABETH ANG OF Quezon City died on Monday at the Philippine Heart Center of a lingering illness. She was 50.

She is survived by husband Roseller; children Derek, Trina, Jean Irish, Kim Van, Alyssa; father Dr. Federico Lomibao-Vila and stepmother Belen of Oceanside California, USA; sisters and brothers-in-law: Dra. Agnes Vila-Mata and Jan Mata, and Dra. Cecile Vila Mangosing and Noi Mangosing of Seattle, USA; nephews, nieces and grandchildren.

Her remains lie in state at Chapel B Loyola Memorial Chapel in Marikina City.

Interment will be on Saturday after the 9 a.m. Mass.

With respect to family planning methods, Huque said he has warned senior officials "that the government could be charged with violating human rights if they focused only on a particular method."

He was referring to natural family planning, reportedly the approach preferred by the Arroyo administration in deference to the Roman Catholic Church.

He said other methods should be made available to provide the public

an informed choice.

Purificacion Quisumbing, chair of the Commission on Human Rights, said that "reproductive health is a human right," and reminded the government that it was a signatory to international human rights treaties.

Huque said civil society groups could actually file cases against the government for not making available all family planning methods and Quisumbing pointed out such cases have been brought against governments in Africa.

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RP now 2nd most dangerous for labor unions

By Marlon Ramos,
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau
and Jerome Aning in Manila

CALAMBA CITY—THE PHILIPPINES IS FAST becoming the most dangerous place for labor unions after Colombia, a US-based labor rights advocacy group said Tuesday as members of a 12-nation International Labor Solidarity Mission fanned out to various provinces to investigate killings, abductions and other attacks on labor leaders and supporters.

Brian Campbell, an officer of the International Labor Rights Fund, said his group and the others were alarmed over the attacks on trade union leaders in the country, some of whom worked in factories owned by multinational corporations from the United States and Europe.

ILRF is a group of lawyers based in Washington, D.C., which helps families of murdered union leaders file criminal cases against corporations suspected of complicity in the killings.

Spate of killings

The spate of labor killings in the Philippines now matches the notoriety of Colombia, which is the most dangerous country for labor unions, Campbell told the Inquirer shortly after he arrived here as part of a group that is looking into recent attacks on labor leaders in the Southern Tagalog region.

"The Philippines is becoming one of the worst countries that I've (visited). What is more disturbing is that it takes less and less to provoke the killings," he said.

Last week, Gerry Cristobal, president of a union

in a semiconductor firm in Cavite, was critically wounded in a shooting involving an intelligence operative in Imus, Cavite. Militant groups said that, contrary to what the police had earlier reported, it was Cristobal who was ambushed.

Campbell and the other members of the solidarity mission hope to increase pressure on the Arroyo government to act swiftly on the murders of labor leaders.

Campbell said the ILRF was currently involved in at least 12 cases where it represents workers on a banana plantation in Guatemala and a German-owned coal company in Colombia.

Dark side of globalization

Campbell said in some countries he had visited, corporations with mother companies in the US and Europe were suspected to have been involved in ordering the slayings of union leaders.

"The people in the US don't have a full understanding of how it is like to be a worker in the Philippines," he said. "It is important that they know what the companies, which they believe are good citizens, are doing here. They should understand that there is a dark side to this globalization and capitalism."

Among the countries with representatives on the solidarity mission are the United States, Belgium, Denmark, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Bangladesh and Nepal. The mission was organized by the local Center for Trade Union and Human Rights, the Ecumenical Institute for Labor Education and Research, and the Alliance of Concerned Teachers.

Some of the other teams have already arrived in Bulacan, Tarlac and Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna,



VICTIM. Pedro Cristobal holds out a picture of his son Gerry, a labor leader who was shot allegedly by the military in Cavite on April 28.

RAFFY LERMAN

na, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon), while others were on their way to Compostela Valley and the island of Negros, according to mission spokesperson Daisy Arago.

"They will talk to the victims and survivors of politically related incidents of violence including those who experienced harassment, abduction and torture because of their trade-union and political activities in their factories and communities," added Arago, who is also executive director of the Center for Trade Union and Human Rights.

Unmasking the killers

The delegates will visit the families of those who were killed and gather first-hand information on the circumstances around the killings.

"We aim to unmask the perpetrators of these heinous crimes which killed more than 60 unionists, labor leaders and advocates since 2001," Arago said.

Arago said the success of the mission would depend on the cooperation of the authorities.

"We expect harassment from local military and police forces but we are determined to push through with the work," she told the Inquirer in a telephone interview.

Aside from the killings, disappearances and abductions, the mission members will also document torture and violations of privacy and intrusions into the workers' homes and families.

The mission is expected to present its report in Manila on May 7. Mission members and local labor rights advocates are to meet with the Commission on Human Rights the following day, Arago said.

In Tarlac, the killings to be investigated are those of Ricardo Ramos, former president of the Central Azucara de Tarlac Labor Union; Tirso Cruz, a leader of the United Luisita Workers' Union; Bayan Muna-Tarlac secretary general Florante Collantes; and Tarlac City

councilor Abelardo Ladera.

Christmas Day torture

In Bulacan, the mission will investigate the murders of Federico de Leon, provincial chair of the Anakpawis Party; Rogelio Concepcion, union president of Solid Development Corp.; and Francisco Parao, who was illegally detained, interrogated and tortured on Christmas Day last year.

In Calabarzon, the delegates will focus on the killings of Nestle Philippines union president Diosdado Fortuna, Alliance of Concerned Teachers national council member Napoleon Pomasdoro and Honda Workers' Union president Romeo Legazpi.

In Negros and southern Mindanao, the mission will study the plight of sugar and banana plantation workers, respectively. They will also look into the murders of at least four leaders of the National Federation of Sugar Workers, a KMU affiliate in the sugar industry.

RP gets high rating from Sokor tourists

By Jerome Aning

THE PHILIPPINES OBTAINED A 94-percent satisfaction rating in a recent survey conducted among South Korean tourists, indicating the country's emergence as the Koreans' most favored travel destination.

The first quarter survey conducted by the Korea Travel Times on a country-by-country basis showed 34 percent of 937 polled were "very much satisfied" with their Philippine experience, and 60 percent "fairly satisfied."

The Koreans' favorite Philippine destinations are Boracay, which got 32 percent; followed by Cebu, 29 percent; and Manila, 26 percent.

As to the most enticing feature of the Philippines, natural unpolluted environment topped the

Korean survey with 35 percent, followed by reasonable travel expenses with 21 percent, and marine sports with 16 percent.

Korea Times, founded in 1950, is an English-language daily in South Korea with a daily circulation of about a million.

Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano, in a statement, welcomed the results of the survey, saying it explained the continued influx of Korean tourists to the Philippines.

Half a million Koreans traveled to the Philippines last year, making South Korea the country's second-largest source of foreign tourists, after the United States.

In January and February this year, 106,000 Koreans arrived, overtaking Americans, who numbered only 97,000. The Korean tourists accounted for nearly a third of 440,000 foreign arrivals.

On the purpose of the trips, 26 percent of those surveyed cited family tour, and 17 percent honeymoon. Weekend travel, backpackers, and business trip accounted for 12 to 13 percent each.

This indicates that the Philippines now looms as a honeymoon destination for Korean newlyweds, who used to pick Phuket, Thailand and Bali, Indonesia for that purpose, Durano said.

Even those who have not yet gone to the Philippines are interested in going.

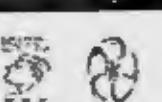
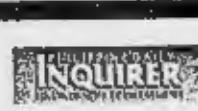
Of the 3,431 respondents who have not yet been to the Philippines, 3,160 or 92 percent expressed willingness to visit the archipelago in two years. Asked how willing they were to visit the Philippines, 47 percent said "very much" and 45 percent "fairly much."

May 31, 2006, 1:00pm - 5:00 pm, Holiday Inn Galleria

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NOTICE TO STOCKHOLDERS ABOITIZ TRANSPORT SYSTEM (ATS)

WE WOULD LIKE TO REQUEST CURRENT STOCKHOLDERS OF THE ABOITIZ TRANSPORT SYSTEM (ATS) TO UPDATE THEIR RECORDS WITH THE STOCK TRANSFER AGENT, SECURITIES TRANSFER SERVICES, INC. (STS), FOR PROPER DOCUMENTATION AND ENSURE THAT STOCKHOLDERS WOULD RECEIVE ALL COMMUNICATION FROM ATS.

STOCKHOLDERS ARE ADVISED TO UPDATE THEIR RECORDS IN PERSON; BRING TWO (2) VALID IDENTIFICATION CARDS (IDs) WITH SIGNATURES, AND PHOTOCOPIES OF THE IDs; AND PRESENT THEIR TAX IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (TIN) TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS:

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 4/F Benpres Building
 Meralco Avenue corner Exchange Road, Pasig City
 Tel. No. 631-8024 to 30

Signed:
 HELEN G. TIU
 Corporate Secretary

ABOITIZ TRANSPORT SYSTEM (ATS) CORPORATION

(Formerly William, Gethong & Aboitiz, Inc.)

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF STOCKHOLDERS

PLACE: Quezon B & C Function Rooms, Makati Shangri-La,

Ayala Avenue corner Makati Avenue, Makati City

DATE: May 25, 2006

TIME: 2:00 P.M.

Dear Stockholder:

You are cordially invited to attend the Annual Meeting of Stockholders of Aboitiz Transport System (ATS) Corporation (the "Company"), formerly William, Gethong & Aboitiz, Inc., which will be held on May 25, 2006 at Quezon B & C Function Rooms, Makati Shangri-La Ayala Avenue corner Makati Avenue, Makati City at 2:00 PM. The agenda for the meeting is as follows:

1. Call to Order
2. Certification of Notice
3. Determination and Declaration of Quorum
4. Approval of Minutes of the Stockholders' Meeting held on June 17, 2005
5. Annual Report for the year ended December 31, 2005
6. Election of the Board of Directors
7. Appointment of External Auditor
8. Additional investment in Zoom-in-Package, Inc.
9. Amendment of Article 7 of the Articles of Incorporation to add a convertibility feature to the redeemable preferred shares so as to allow holders of redeemable preferred shares, at their option, to convert every redeemable preferred share into two (2) common shares of the Company, which conversion must be exercised on or before December 29, 2006 or within 120 days from the approval by the Securities and Exchange Commission of such amendment, whichever occurs earlier.
10. Approval and Ratification of all Acts and Resolutions of the Board of Directors and Management for the period covering 11 May 2005 to 27 April 2006
11. Such Other Matters as may properly come before it
12. Adjournment

Only stockholders of record in the books of the Company at the close of business on April 24, 2006 will be entitled to vote at said stockholders' meeting.

Manila, Philippines, April 28, 2006.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
 By:
 HELEN G. TIU
 Corporate Secretary

Brokers say 'boycott' was act of protest, not sabotage

By Leila B. Salaverria

CUSTOMS BROKERS DID NOT FILE import entries at Manila's two major seaports last Tuesday simply to highlight their grievances against the government and not to sabotage the Bureau of Customs' collection of import duties, a spokesman for the brokers said yesterday.

Samson Gabisan of the Samahan ng mga Personero sa Aduana (SPA) said the group's action was meant to inform Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales that the brokers were protesting his antismuggling task force's seizure of shipments that had already been released by the bureau.

Import entries are the basis for the collection of taxes and duties on imports.

No environment permit issued to La Mesa housing

Blanche S. Rivera

THE PLANNED HOUSING project for government employees inside the La Mesa watershed does not have the environmental compliance certificate required by the government, agencies under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources said.

The old National Waterworks and Sewerage Administration (Nawasa), now the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, has not applied for an ECC either with the Environmental Management Bureau or the Laguna Lake Development Authority. "There's no pending application in our EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) unit ... No one has contacted

"We just wanted to let him know about our problems; that's only our intention," Gabisan said in a telephone interview. "I don't think it will affect the monthly collection, but on the day of the non-filing, the record will probably show that the collection was less than usual."

Gabisan had earlier estimated that the Port of Manila at the South Harbor and the Manila International Container Port at the North Harbor could have lost about P30 million each as a result of the brokers' action.

He said some of his association's members had wanted the non-filing of import entries to last for more than a day, but the body decided that one day was enough.

The SPA, which is based at the Port of Manila at the South Harbor, was

joined in the protest by the Aksyon Agad Samahan ng mga Personero at Personera, the association of brokers operating at the Manila International Container Port at the North Harbor.

Morales, in meeting with both groups during the protest, explained that some of the shipments had to be seized even after they had been cleared because the authorities discovered that the goods had either been misdeclared or undervalued and, therefore, were not slapped the proper taxes.

"All these are being done to collect the proper taxes and give the government its due," Morales told the brokers.

The Bureau of Customs is tasked to collect P191.5 bil-

lion in 2006. It has exceeded its monthly collection target for the past four months.

Gabisan told the INQUIRER the brokers were pleased that Morales met with them and gave them a chance to present their problems, even though not all of their requests were granted.

"We're happy enough that the Com-

missioner talked with us and we were able to present our side. We want to cooperate with him. We just want what's good for everyone," he said.

The brokers requested that the apprehended shipments be brought to the Port of Manila instead of at the Harbor Center, which supposedly lacks facilities. Morales said he would study the request.

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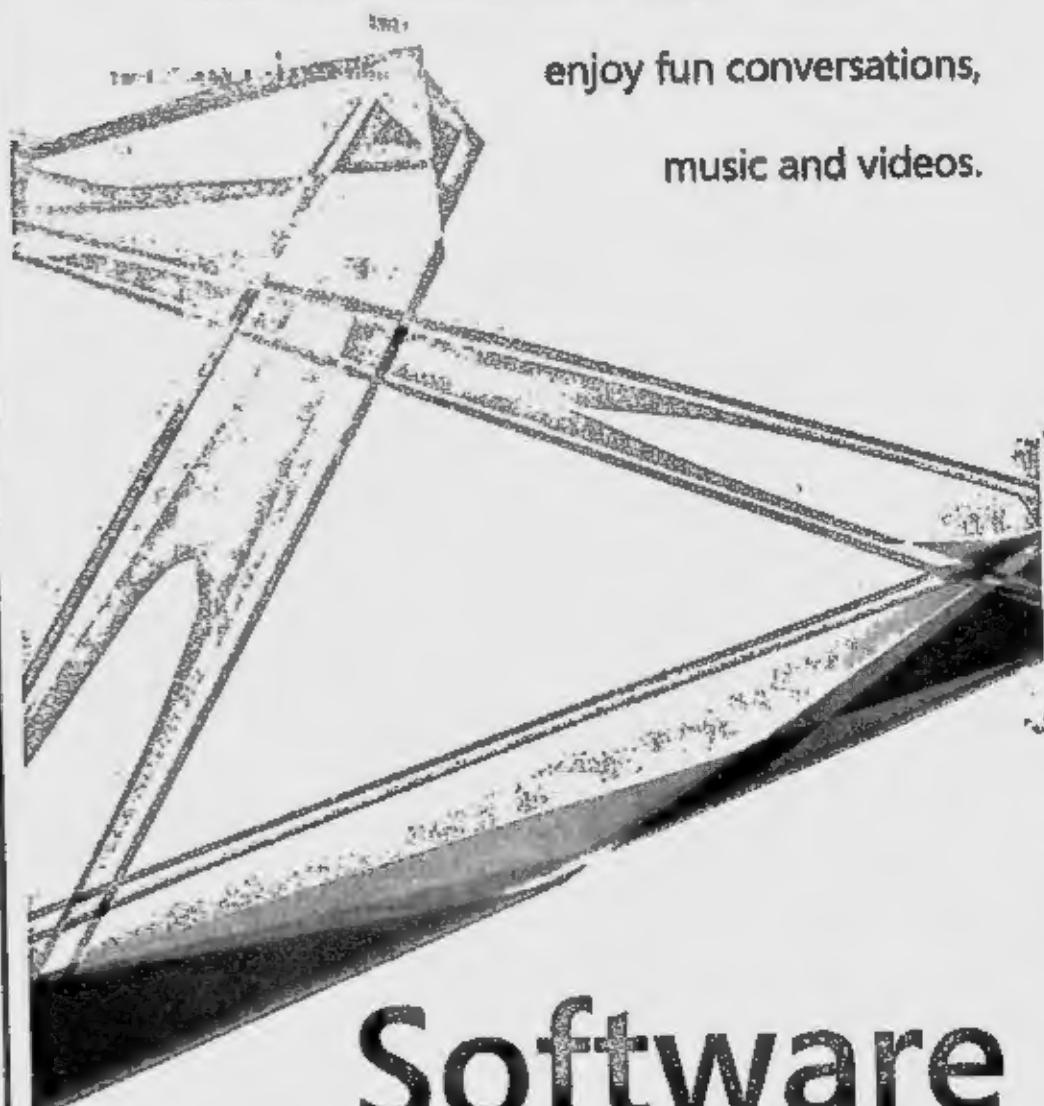
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Insult and defiance

SEN. JUAN PONCE ENRILE IS QUITE WELL-KNOWN to have a temper that occasionally finds expression in unparliamentary language. But never have his angry outbursts been more justified as when he raged and ranted against the failure of two Cabinet members and the internal revenue commissioner to testify before a Senate committee hearing on several economic measures earlier this week.

EDITORIALS The Senate committee on ways and means, headed by Sen. Ralph Recto, had earlier invited Finance Secretary Margarito Teves, Trade Secretary Peter Favila, Internal Revenue Commissioner Jose Buñag and Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales to attend the committee hearing scheduled for Tuesday. The hearing was called to discuss three pending bills: one seeking the reduction of the individual income tax rates; another one rationalizing fiscal incentive; and the third proposing measures to curb smuggling. Only Morales honored the invitation. But Teves, Favila and Buñag didn't show up at all, and didn't even bother to send any explanation. Instead, they sent their underlings, prompting Enrile to ask whether these heads of offices still gave any importance to the hearings of Congress. Enrile reminded the administration's key economic managers that they were being asked to explain how they could solve some of the country's economic problems and that they were being asked to do so by the people's elected representatives. "And if you don't want to do it, the hell with you!" he thundered.

Malacañang sought to justify the snub of the Senate by doing what it seems to be doing frequently these days: lying through its teeth. Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor said, "We are not aware of the hearing, and neither did the officials ask for the President's consent to attend."

Maybe Defensor should start wearing a brace on his nose instead of on his teeth before it becomes longer than Pinocchio's. On the day the trade and finance officials made themselves scarce, the newspapers reported they were expected at the Senate hearing.

If Defensor has not made it a habit to read newspapers yet, he really should. Because if he did, he would have known that Cabinet members do not need the President's clearance to testify in hearings called by Congress in aid of legislation. That was what the Supreme Court said in its recent decision voiding parts of Executive Order 464, which sought precisely to keep Congress from inquiring into anything that the executive branch was doing.

Thus, by refusing the Senate investigation, these officials did not only show disrespect to the Senate, as Enrile put it; they also defied the Supreme Court and committed something illegal. And no one, not even Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, should tell them that it's all right to continue doing what the Court has already deemed to be illegal, just because the decision (which the Court reached unanimously) has yet to become final and executory.

Maximum tolerance

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN SHAMELESS, BOORISH motorists and inept, idiotic policemen converge in one place? Chaos and a traffic jam extending some five kilometers.

Which was exactly what happened late in the afternoon of Labor Day on the highway from Dinalupihan in Bataan leading to Barangay Sta. Cruz in Lubao, Pampanga. There was no accident or road repair to slow down traffic, and, of course, no policeman to direct it. What there was in abundance were thoughtless drivers who believed it was their God-given right to get ahead of everybody else. So they occupied the right shoulder, and the opposite lane, and the opposite shoulder as well, clogging the highway at certain points.

But Monday wasn't just one of those days apparently. The same thing happened Saturday morning, going the opposite way. What made Monday's experience the more remarkable was the attitude of four police officers (three males and one female) at a checkpoint in Sta. Cruz. None of them moved to apprehend any of the offending drivers, even as they cut into the right lane from the opposite side right in front of them. And when one exasperated motorist demanded to know why they were not citing anyone for violating traffic, guess what one policeman screamed in reply? "Go, and arrest them yourself!"

In the President's hometown, they must have different traffic rules. Or they have policemen who believe it is the citizen's duty to enforce laws—not theirs.

OPINION

Text us your feedback: Inquirer opt name/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

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Tales of two cities

VIEWPOINT



Juan L. Mercado

VISITORS TO OUR CITIES ARE OFTEN appalled by the garbage, traffic gridlock, water shortages and urban blight. That's bad. The more discerning are stunned by trash passed off as "urban policy." That's worse.

"Any city, however small, is in fact divided into two: one the city of the poor, the other of the rich," Plato wrote 400 years before Christ.

Mounting population and economic change have long dispersed these fragmented urban clusters beyond their old paper borders. They've spilled over into suburban "edge cities."

Yet, many officials act as if tomorrow's cities will simply be more of the decrepit. We know, in our bones, this situation won't carry us very far. Poverty, population and expectations, stoked by information revolution, are "imploding" Plato's fractured cities.

Today, the mayors of 65 cities are debating the Asian Institute of Management's Philippine Cities Competitiveness Ranking Project.

Davao, Las Piñas, Makati, Marikina and Muntinlupa topped the metro category. Why Cebu didn't measure up flummoxed Mayor Tomas Osmeña.

Bacolod and Iloilo were among mid-size city topnotchers. Naga made it again, in the small city category, with Tagbilaran and Tagum, among others.

Some upstart mayors are conducting in-house reviews. These signal that the AIM objective—"to promote healthy competition among Philippine cities"—is being partly achieved.

Many city officials, however, think small and old. Now, they must think different and new, if their cities are to break out of stagnation.

Will this reverse the "multiplying cities" trend? In 1995, there were 60 cities. Today, we have 117. Talisay and Naga, in Cebu province, want to join the club. So do a dozen others.

The tougher chores, however, lie ahead: how to mount sustained policies and programs to make cities engines for economic growth, and at the same time keep them livable.

The formula for success is not new. But it is, as G.K. Chesterton said, rarely tried. "Foremost is the leadership value of the local government

officials," AIM says. Next are "a strong support system, offered by business alliances and responsive civil society."

The simplest definition of good governance still remains the best: "the way those with power wisely use that power." And Princeton University's Robert Putnam identifies "four pillars" of that nugget of wisdom, namely:

1. Transparency: Is there consistent access to relevant, timely and understandable information? This is critical with budgets and conflict-of-interest issues.

Naga City publishes and posts on the Internet its budget, dam on awarded bids, etc. This trimmed waste and graft. Cebu City backtracked on a similar plan, which would have thrown Mayor Osmeña's secrecy-blanketed yen loans open to public scrutiny.

Lack of clarity is partly due to flabby internal controls (over funds) in local governments, says the ADB in its decentralization study. This infects cities and provinces, down to barangays. Of 1,689 local government units audited, only 250 proved squeaky clean. City Halls often bog down in overpricing and procurement scandals.

2. Accountability: Are officials held to account? Or can they get away unquestioned, unscathed, for arbitrary decisions?

Mayors who offer time-bound performance targets are the exception. Most of them mouth motherhood rhetoric. A constructive opposition is essential in pinning down responsibility. A press that is always moving on to the next headline often leaves follow-up questions unasked.

3. Predictability: Are laws and rules fair, clear, known in advance and uniformly enforced?

Mayor Osmeña decided to funnel local taxes away from Lahug—where the multi-awarded barangay leader Mary Ann de los Santos presides—to other barangays where his partisans rule. The only predictability is the unpredictability of political whim.

4. Participation: The growth of civil society and information media is reshaping citizen participation, specially in oversight functions.

In Abra, a community group helped "audit" public works projects. It earned the respect of the government and people such that it was included in the bids and awards committee. But it also triggered an assassination. "Such examples are celebrated because they seem to require willingness to take risks in a political environment that is permissive about civil and political violence," ADB notes.

In the future, the World Bank says, cities will need to turn away from obsolete 19th-century models where the City Hall provides most infrastructure and service that are invariably shoddy and inadequate.

"Cities around the world are divided into those who can provide for their own needs and those who cannot.... (City Halls) often cater to one part of a city and, at best, adopt a posture of benign neglect toward the other. (These) make the divisions even deeper."

Shouldn't city governments, therefore, trim their tattered sails "as primary service providers?" the bank asks. Its alternative role should be that of an "enabler." City Hall would instead rely increasingly on the private sector to deliver basic services.

Successful partnership-based models are described as "the quiet revolution" in local governance, the bank observes. And the AIM project seeks to help mayors grope their way to these new models.

"In the present lies not only the nightmare of what the city will become if current trends continue," Anne Spirin writes in "The Granite Garden." It also contains "dreams of what the city could be."

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Breeding

THERE'S THE RUB



Conrado de Quiros

right conduct to lie, cheat and steal.

"GMA could have said her piece in some other place but not in a graduation ceremony. GMA has no lack of media outlets, Channel 4 being chief of them, a thing that as in Marcos' time we are paying for to lie to us; and mouthpieces in government and in media to give the youth the message that to get ahead in life they need not speak the truth, they need only speak English. Did she have to inflict herself on a graduation ceremony, too? Graduations are blessed occasions, a time for graduates to brim with lofty thoughts and ideals. The guest speakers you get there are living examples you want the youth to emulate. GMA is the living example you want the youth to emulate?"

I agree: getting through college doesn't naturally make you educated or enlightened, and getting a Ph.D. in Economics doesn't naturally make you civil or well-bred. That is not a counsel best addressed to the heckler, that is a counsel best addressed at the heckled.

But is Pangilinan equally guilty of censorable or reprehensible behavior? There, too, I would disagree. I go back to the story of the emperor and his new clothes. You have a world where people are compelled, under pain of looking foolish, to believe that a naked Emperor or wearing clothes of intricate weave, you need a boy who will shout insolently with voice of innocence, "Why, the emperor is born!" to rouse everyone from their delusion.

We've become that world. We are not only learning to accept baseness and shamelessness as necessary, we are learning to accept them as exemplary. We are not just allowing ourselves to be coerced into silence in the face of inquiry,

we are allowing ourselves to believe being silent is the only way to "move on." You have GMA no longer ashamed of what she did during the last election—or well before it when she lied to the people about not running ever to spare them never-ending divisiveness—indeed, you have GMA going on to parade herself before the kids as mentor and role model, then the kids have every right to fight back. Then the kids have every right to tell their elders who are being stupid while trying to appear wise: "You blind fools, can't you see the emperor is stark raving naked?"

In normal circumstances, Pangilinan's behavior would have been cause for dismay, but in these extraordinary times, it is cause for elation. There's a time and place for everything? Agreed. But in a time and place where witnesses to wrongdoing are being prevented from witnessing in the Senate, and protesters to that same wrongdoing are being prevented from protesting in the streets; in a time and place where the citizens are being told that they may say their piece only in the time and place—and manner—a fake president designates, what else is there but to rebel? What else is there but to see that, in a tyranny, the time and place and way to protest is every time and everywhere and every way?

Breeding is nice. But being polite in the face of injustice is not breeding, it is acquiescing. Being respectful in the face of oppression is not breeding, it is groveling. I will prefer Pangilinan's insolence anytime to that kind of breeding. That insolence shows real breeding, the kind that has to do with discernment and courage, not the kind that has to do with manners and etiquette. The first breeds character, the second breeds only socialites. Breeding in the end is not about learning how to handle the right spoon and the right fork at the right time, it is about learning how to do the right thing at the right time. Breeding isn't shown by social graces in cocktail parties, it is shown by grace under fire.

Still, thank God for Theresa Pangilinan.

OPINION

A1

THURSDAY, MAY 4, 2006

The dilemma of curiosity and its use

ALBERT EINSTEIN ONCE SAID, "I HAVE NO special gift, but I am passionately curious." Certainly, Einstein was being tremendously modest. But, just as certainly, curiosity is a powerful driving force in scientific discovery. Indeed, along with talent and interest, as well as mathematical or other quantitative abilities, curiosity is a necessary characteristic of any successful scientist.

Curiosity betrays emotional passion. It is a state of being involuntarily gripped by something that is difficult to ward off and for which—since one cannot act otherwise—one is accountable only in a limited sense. We all come into the world curious, equipped with the psychological drive to explore the world and to expand the terrain that we master. It is no coincidence that a well-known book on developmental psychology bears the title, "The Scientist in the Crib," a work that traces the parallels between small children's behavior and the processes and research strategies that are usual in science.

But the urge for knowledge that drives inborn curiosity to transcend given horizons does not remain uncurbed. Parents can tell many a tale about how, with the beginning of school, their children's playful approach suddenly changes, as they must now focus on objects dictated by the curriculum. Likewise, however desirable its ability to produce the unexpected and unforeseeable, science today cannot claim that it is not accountable to society.

Curiosity is insatiable and, in research, it is inextricably tied to the unforeseeability of results. Research is an endless process, with a destination

WORLD VIEW

Helga Nowotny

that no one can predict precisely. The more that unexpected results, brought forth by research in the laboratory, are a precondition for further innovations, the more pressure there is to bring the production of knowledge under control, to direct research in specific directions, and to tame scientific curiosity. But curiosity must not be limited too severely, lest science's ability to produce new knowledge be lost.

This dilemma is at the center of many policy debates surrounding scientific research. To be sure, not everything that arouses scientific curiosity is controversial; in fact, most scientific research is not. Still, the dilemma is obvious in pioneering fields like biomedicine, nanotechnology, and neurosciences. Research in these areas sometimes meets with vehement rejection on religious grounds as in the case of stem-cell research; or owing to fear of, for example, the possibility of altering human identity.

Curiosity implies a certain immoderation, a certain necessary excess. That is precisely what makes it a passion: It is amoral and follows its own laws, which is why society insists on taming it in various ways. Private investment in research directs curiosity on to paths where new scientific breakthroughs promise high economic potential. Politicians expect research to function as a motor

of economic growth. Ethics commissions want to establish limits on research, even if these require frequent re-negotiation. The demand for more democratic input, finally, also seeks to influence research priorities.

These considerations must be borne in all efforts to support basic research. In Europe, the establishment of the European Research Council (ERC) is entering a decisive phase, with crucial implications concerning the role we are prepared to concede to scientific curiosity. For the first time, support for basic research is being made possible on the EU level. Individual teams are to enter a pan-European competition to determine the best of the best, opening a free space for scientific curiosity and enabling the unforeseeable outcomes that are characteristic of cutting-edge research.

The dilemma—and it is a decisive one—is that today we cherish the passionate curiosity of an Albert Einstein. But we still want to control the unforeseeable consequences to which curiosity leads. The dilemma must be overcome by allowing curiosity to be protected and supported, while trying to capture those of its fruits that will benefit society. How we accomplish this must be continuously negotiated in the public sphere. Irreducible contradictions will remain, and therein lies the ambivalence that characterizes modern societies' stance toward science.

Project Syndicate

Helga Nowotny is author of "Unerlässliche Neugier: Innovation in einer fragilen Zukunft" (Insatiable Curiosity: Innovation in an Uncertain Future) and vice chair of the ERC Scientific Council.

Feedback on 'Everest'

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

"I think the Department of Justice should push for the resolution of the 'Wowowee' case...as soon as possible."

"Because when something happens to the ABS-CBN Everest Team—and the one-year short cut is one big red flag which could mean something might happen—ABS-CBN would again be embroiled in another case. But then nothing gets resolved in this country..."

(Strong language deleted.—CPD)

Last year, the Pakistani Air Force did a dramatic rescue of Slovenian climber Tomas Humar who was trapped for six days on one of the highest peaks of the Himalayas. Humar was stalled by bad weather at about 20,000 feet on a narrow ledge on the Rupal face of Nanga Parbat, the world's ninth highest peak. This renowned climber (1,500 ascents) tried to take a route never tried before since the peak was first scaled in 1953. He never made it to the top but at least he made it alive.

The rescue pilots couldn't hope for much as the ledge was impossible to reach. It was the hand of God that did it, a rescuer said. A BBC report said that by the time the rescue effort was in motion, the Slovenian had run out of food, gas in his stove and radio batteries. He kept himself warm by digging snow but became increasingly cold, hungry and in danger of frostbite. At least, he was not disoriented.

The only way to get to him was to throw a rope that he could tie around himself. The aircraft would then fly with the climber dangling from the aircraft.

The weather was so bad three attempts failed. The rescuers could not even drop food. The rope throwing did succeed, but had Humar failed to grab hold of the rope on the first try, the chopper would have gone back to base.

It was indeed the "hand of God" that made possible Humar's "insanely good luck," and the heroic efforts of men and their costly machine. The Pakistani Air Force Lama SA-315B, built to operate at high altitudes, holds the world record for the highest-ever helicopter flight at 12,441 meters.

Send comments to ceresp@info.com.ph

What's in it for you

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

prove anything politically?

I don't see how. Not under the scheme being peddled at present. When the Senate, about a decade ago, was poised to pass an anti-dynasty bill, the House advised the former to forget it because it would never, ever, even be calendared for deliberation in the House. (The bill provided that a congressman or mayor or governor can't be replaced by a wife or a child; a president cannot have any relative within the fourth degree of consanguinity in political office for the duration of his or her term; and members of the same family cannot compete for the same office, except a Senate seat, which is contested on a national scale and thus relatively immune to the lock dynasties have on local politics; or local council seats, which are so plentiful it's also difficult to see them as dynastic preserves.)

Consider, too, that the House also objected to the Senate proposal to legislate that 60 percent of local income from taxes remain with the local governments instead of being sent to the national government, because it would lessen the influence congressmen have over their rivals—the mayors. Had it been enacted into law, the bill would have been a meaningful step toward freeing the provinces from national control. And yet, today, there are those who would not only abolish the Senate, but go on to merge the executive with the legislative branches.

If the alternative that is being proposed is along the lines of replacing Jojo Binay with Lito Lapid, come on! Let's grant that there are those who dis-

like Binay, but is Lapid any kind of solution? And what does it say about those who view Lapid as a solution? And you trust them with the economy while they place the country's business center under Lapid? What happened to all that talk about opposing the so-called politics of popularity?

I'll tell you what the pro-Charter change arguments boil down to: If you eliminate all checks and balances, if you remove all controls preventing a one-party state and a president-for-life (or prime minister-for-life), if you remove the legal limitations on the exercise of presidential will and whim; in other words, if you absolutely trust not only the President (who, after all, won't live forever), but more importantly, the majority coalition tolerating her leadership for the moment, then you should be for constitutional change. After all, the only assurance you have is not on paper or in the system. The only assurance you can have depends on a single assumption: that given absolute, unlimited, unquestionable power, a coalition, any coalition, can be trusted—and expected—to use its power only for the public good, never for its own, selfish interests, and surely not for the benefit of its political allies. In other words, all you have is faith.

Faith in whom? Don't think in terms of the administration coalition. Think of any coalition. Because democracy is not about a particular group holding power forever. It is also about the probability that one day, today's minority could be tomorrow's majority. Either side can't be given what those in power today wants. Because no one, no group, should have such complete, unquestionable, power. To surrender that power to one individual or group is madness and reflects a lunatic attitude toward governance.

Would you hand anyone, in the administration or the opposition, today's leaders and, perhaps, tomorrow's leaders, too, a blank check?

Comments welcome at www.quezon.ph/blog

Forks

I OFTEN WONDER WHAT MY LIFE WOULD HAVE BEEN like had I chosen a different path. Would I have been happier? Would my life be much simpler? What would have happened if I had taken the other branch of the fork in "my road of life"?

For instance, had I pursued my childhood dream of becoming a doctor, I'd probably be a pediatrician now, or a surgeon, or a dermatologist. But I can only guess. And that's life: whenever you hit a fork in the road, you can only take one path. And once you've taken your chosen path, you will never know what would have happened if you took the other.

The roads of our life are intricately constructed. They consist of a series of forks and crossroads, and these make our lives more exciting. The major forks in my road were those that I reached after college.

My college graduation was definitely one of the most memorable events in my life, and it merited a big celebration. After all, I was able to make my parents proud with the pieces of copper metal I brought home. But surprisingly, after the celebration died down, I felt empty. I feared that my college diploma and the honors I had received were not enough to prepare me for the world that I was about to face, the real world.

I had just turned 19 then, and I felt lost, confused and even scared. First, I had to make a choice between exploring the field of medicine or staying put in the more familiar world of chemistry. I chose the latter because it was the world I lived in during my college days. If I managed to survive those four years, I told myself, then I could go on living there for the rest of my life. Simply put, I chose what I thought to be the safer path.

Taking the path immediately led me to another fork. Should I look for a job in industry or in the academe? I decided to take my time before making that crucial decision.

My laziness took over, however. The precious time that I was supposed to spend on evaluating what I wanted to do with my life was spent mostly on sleeping.

I was stuck at this fork for about a year. In that one year, I slept as long as I could until my eyes hurt or my back ached from too much lying in bed, or until I got hungry. When I wasn't sleeping, I was watching TV. Sometimes, I would just watch the people around me. Everyone was moving. Everyone was doing something. Everyone was living his life the way it was meant to be lived. Everybody, except for me. I was standing still.

Then one day, my father told me something I will never forget. "Chey, life doesn't end after college," he said.

My father's words, simple though they may be, magically shook me out of the trance-like state I was in. I was young and healthy, and I had the whole world in front of me. I had to do something with my life.

With this realization came a decision: I would take the path leading to the academe. Again, I had chosen to take the safer path.

So after a year-long hiatus, I went back to the comforting arms of the place that I consider my second home, the University of the Philippines Los Baños. This time, I wasn't one of those who were copying notes on the blackboard; I was the one writing on it. I quickly discovered that I had a passion for teaching. I liked what I was doing, and I was glad I had chosen the right path.

But after three years, I just got tired of the place, even if it was providing me security. I yearned for a new environment. One day, I woke up facing another fork in my road. Should I continue living in the comfort of my homeland or should I cross oceans and explore the world, literally and figuratively?

At that time, I was 23—and still feeling lost and confused. But I wasn't scared anymore. I had become a bit more bold and daring—bold enough to choose a riskier path. I decided to step out of my comfort zone and jump into the unknown, regardless of the perils awaiting me.

It was the biggest risk I've taken so far. It meant leaving everyone whom I love and care for. It meant having to do everything by myself. But I had to do it.

It has been almost four years since I started treading the path I had bravely chosen. Though I'm happy with my choice, I wouldn't say that my journey has been smooth. In fact, I've encountered a lot of thorns and bumps in the road, which sometimes made me want to run back to the security of my previous existence. The inner strength, which I didn't know I had, coupled with my faith in God prevented me from abandoning this branch of the fork.

Although I pretend to ignore it to avoid the stress, I'm aware that a few more steps from where I am now, I'll be hitting another fork. One side will lead me back to my homeland and the other will keep me on the path I am traversing.

Honestly, it's difficult to tell which path is safer. The first will lead me back where I can be with my loving family again. But the second assures me a fruitful professional career.

When you are 9, or even 23, it's OK to be scared and confused. But someone who's about to turn 27 needs to be more courageous and decisive. I hope that when I reach the next fork, I can confidently say: "Hello, fork. I'm 27. I am in control of my life, and I certainly know where I want to go." Then I hope I will be able to walk in the direction of my chosen path, without looking back.

Michelle D. Regulacio, 26, is studying for her Ph.D. in chemistry at Georgetown University.

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THEY SAID

Merit over seniority

"In promotions to the ranks of lieutenant colonel, colonel and general, we are going to put more emphasis on merit than seniority."

—National Defense Secretary Avelina Cruz, proposing an overhaul of the promotion system in the military

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Lack of imagination

I AGREE WITH CONRADO DE Quiros. Our country has never lacked for better alternatives to Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. If only we would have the eyes to see them (PDI, 4/27/06).

Yes, we have so many good citizens who show much in the way of honesty and integrity, putting to shame our politicians. These are citizens who have shown their love of country not by running for public office, but through their

own acts of courage and generosity.

We have Tony Meloto, founder and executive director of the very successful Gawad Kalinga. There's Benjamin Abadiano, a Ramon Magsaysay awardee for his steadfast commitment to indigenous Filipinos (Mangyans, in particular) and their hopes for peace and better lives.

But then, even a child could be a better leader than Ms Arroyo.



JOSEPH DOMINIC O. ROMERO,
jaodeballs@gmail.com

the name of "delicadeza" when the person heading it herself doesn't know the meaning of the word.

What's worse is that our people are just willing to take it as it is. I thought we had learned our lessons from our experience with the dictatorship, but then again I

must have thought wrong.

We are now back to the same predicament, it's just that people don't see this yet. I hope that our people are not too blind to see all the wicked things happening around us.

—ERIC TRAYA,
terice@yahoo.com

Curtailing freedom in the name of delicadeza

THE NEWS STORY "DOJ CHIEF waits student heckler probed" (PDI, 4/26/06) was so absurd and unbelievable I guess it just really showed what kind of society we now have in the Philippines.

It is so sad to see that our freedom of speech is being curtailed by the present administration in

Politics-free CSC a must in parliamentary system

THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION is a constitutional body that was established more than a hundred years ago to ensure merit and fitness, efficiency and honesty in the civilian bureaucracy. Currently, the question of merit and fitness on appointments is at issue given the presidential power of discretion. The "best fit principle" needs to apply under any condition and circumstance, based on the qualification standards set by the CSC, but this ought not to be cast on stone.

Under President Marcos, the Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP) was established to develop a corps of senior managers with the competency and development orientation to manage government agencies.

Under President Aquino, a number of people, recruited from the private sector, were appointed to third-level positions and took the required examinations and training for security of tenure. During her term, she appointed a

number of presidential advisers as well.

When President Ramos assumed office in 1992, he appointed a number from the third level ranks, including among others, myself, Carmen Reodica (health department) and Luis Laigo (social welfare department), to Cabinet positions which ordinarily are given to political appointees.

During President Estrada's term, the Career Executive Service Board, of which I was the chair then, submitted a "blue book" which contained the names of eligible career executive service officers (Cesos) from whom the President could draw his appointees.

To him, the list didn't matter. Indeed, rationalizing the relationship between the CSC and the Office of the President is enduring. The question is this, what is the civil service role on presidential appointees? What is the result when it is not followed? And finally what kind of a relationship is

there between the chair of the CSC and the President?

I am reminded of the message of former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher that a CSC must continue to streamline the bureaucracy, fight graft and corruption and pay the civil servants well. This ought to be the 3-point agenda of the CSC and the Office of the President. We need a strong civil service insulated from partisan politics if we want a parliamentary system of government.

Indeed, when you have good people in government, how can you lose? In the same vein, when you do not have good people, how can you ever win?

—CORAZON ALMA G. DE LEON,
secretary general,
Philippine National Red Cross;
former chair,
Civil Service Commission;
former secretary,
Department of Social Welfare
and Development

Meralco explains delay in refund

THIS HAS REFERENCE TO THE LETTER OF Violeta O. Reyes titled "Now among the poorest of the poor" (PDI, 4/25/06).

Reyes submitted the refund requirements at our Mandaluyong Branch in January 2005. She, however, failed to submit the required BIR Certificate of Registration (COR) and instead submitted the 2004 Income Tax Return of an institution named Bahay Malabon Inc. As the registered customer, Reyes should have submitted her Tax Identification Number (TIN). This submission is supposed to facilitate the matching of our report on taxes withheld with the customer's name in the BIR's TIN database. Because of Reyes' failure to submit her TIN, there was need to further evaluate her refund claim.

Her claim was approved after our Lega. Ofice established that Bahay Malabon Inc. was a restaurant being operated by Reyes at her residence. Had she submitted the COR, which reflects the name of the establishment and its owner, the additional evaluation would not have been necessary and the delay in the processing would have been avoided.

Since Reyes chose the Fixed Credit to Bill scheme, her first credit, retroactive July 2005, will be reflected in her next bill scheduled at the end of April 2006.

To explain the logic behind the requirements, Revenue Memorandum Order No 22-2005 issued by the Bureau of Internal Revenue states that "The Certificate of Registration (COR) shall be submitted to Meralco by all commercial and industrial customers prior to the release of the refund or application to bill in order for Meralco to get the Tax Identification Number (TIN)." The identification cards are necessary to ascertain that the claimant is the right person entitled to the refund. This is to protect both the customer and our company from possible fraudulent claims.

—ELPI O. CUNA JR.,
vice president and head,
Corporate Communication,
Meralco, Pasig City

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR
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- D. LABORATORY SUPPLIES
- E. JANITORIAL SUPPLIES
- F. CATERING SUPPLIES
- G. PLUMBING SUPPLIES
- H. ELECTRICAL SUPPLIES
- I. OFFICE EQUIPMENTS
- J. WOMEN & OTHER SUPPLIES

SCHEDULE OF BIDDING ACTIVITIES:

Issuance of Bid Documents: May 22, 2006 (10:00 AM)

Pre-Bid Conference: May 23, 2006 (10:00 AM)

Checking of Eligibility Requirements: May 23, 2006 (10:00 AM)

Bidding: May 23, 2006 (10:00 AM)

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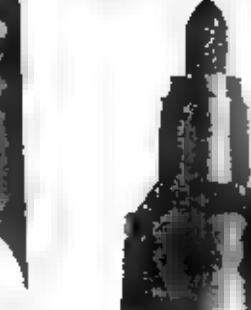
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Velarde hits Cha-cha ...

From page A1

agree to unspecified transitory provisions in the interim period

In remarks to the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines, Velarde said he understood that the terms of all incumbent officials would be extended and they would form the interim parliament without the benefit of an election under the transitory provisions being discussed in Congress.

"This, to my simple reading, is a kind of power grab all over again, robbing the people of their right and power to choose their national leaders," said Velarde, the politically influential leader of the Catholic charismatic group.

The 66-year-old Velarde said he was trying to bring together Ms Arroyo, Senate President Franklin Drilon, Speaker Jose de Venecia and other congressional leaders to a meeting to resolve differences over the mode of amending the Constitution.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, however, said that Velarde's opposition to the initiative was too late. He said that the campaign had gathered the required number of signatures—8.5 million of the registered voters—to push ahead.

"It appears that the group got the 3 percent per district and 12 percent nationwide," said Ermita. He also pointed out that Velarde was not against Charter change but the mode of carrying it out.

Cha-cha cannot be avoided

Added National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales: "Efforts to amend the Constitution, either through a people's initiative or some other means will continue ... The time for change has come and this can't be avoided."

Velarde announced in an exclusive interview with the INQUIRER last week his opposition to the signature campaign. He said El Shaddai would hold a prayer rally for the enlightenment of those behind the people's initiative.

He also said he had instructed his members, estimated to be five to seven million strong, not to sign the petitions being distributed by the pro-Arroyo group Sigaw ng Bayan.

Velarde pointed out that the Supreme Court had ruled in 1997 that a people's initiative was illegal without an enabling law. He said that a constitutional convention would take a long time to realize desired Charter changes.

"How can we expect the people to respect and obey the laws of the land when its high officials do the opposite?" said Velarde.

Most feasible

"The most feasible process now is a constituent assembly," Velarde said, "under certain parameters if the Senate and the House leadership can come together and that is what I'm planning to do—bring them together with the President and set parameters on a constituent assembly so this Cha-cha is done the proper way."

The constituent assembly will consist of the present Senate and House, which will both convene to propose constitutional amendments.

Velarde said he believed the Senate, majority of whose members were opposed to the constituent assembly, were "reasonable people" who might consider this mode of changing the Constitution.

"It is for this reason that I have consented to be interviewed by the Philippine Daily Inquirer on these issues, as a 'voice in the desert' to sound the alarm on the lawlessness that will come if this illegal people's initiative and its agenda is not unmasked," Velarde said.

He said the proposed transitory provisions did not set a date for the election of the members of the regular parliament and



VELARDE: Cha-cha "a kind of power grab all over again." ERICK AMAZAS



NUNS attend Mass and conference against Cha-cha at the Asian Social Institute in Manila ERICK AMAZAS

its establishment. He said that upon the establishment of the interim parliament, it would propose amendments to the Constitution.

Without direction, instability seen

"It means that what this people's initiative intends to do is only to immediately install a parliamentary form without its legs and arms and with no definite or clear directions on how it will operate and how it will run the government. Thus, political instability will follow," he said.

Velarde also called attention to a proposal that Ms Arroyo and Vice President Noli de Castro continue to exercise their powers under the 1987 Constitution unless im-

peached by a vote of two-thirds of all members of the interim parliament.

"We do not know how and where this Interim Parliament, with nobody to check it, will bring our country once it is installed," he said.

Velarde said he had informed Ms Arroyo about his opposition to the people's initiative.

"She said she will look into these provisions and study them further," he said.

Velarde said De Venecia also asked him to endorse the people's initiative and that he "bluntly told" the Speaker he would not support an initiative that did not come from the people but from government officials and be forced without the benefit of thorough deliberations.

Still a GMA supporter

Velarde said he remained supportive of Ms Arroyo and her completing her term up to 2010.

Opposition politicians seeking Ms Arroyo's ouster since last year over vote-rigging and corruption allegations have accused her of trying to change the Constitution to cement her grip on power and divert public attention from recent scandals.

Ms Arroyo has said the Philippines needs to reform its flawed political system to hasten the country's economic growth.

The proposed Charter amendments would do away with the Senate, eliminating a crucial institution that checks wrongdoing and excesses of the executive branch, said Velarde.

Former Supreme Court Justice Vicente



EX-PRESIDENT Estrada is in a pensive mood at his Greenhills residence he hasn't set foot on in five years. RAPPLER

Erap comes ...

From page A1

years since he had been in his own house," Estrada's media liaison, Freddie Ramos, told the INQUIRER.

"Happy birthday, Ma, st Joseph ito (this is Joseph)," Estrada whispered to his fragile-looking mother, Doña Mary Ejercito.

She nodded in response, in an apparent recognition of her son. "Nakakaiyak naman (It could make one cry)," one female supporter said as she wiped the tears from her eyes.

Doña Mary lives in a nearby street. On her arrival at Polk, she was taken inside the house in a wheelchair.

Before Doña Mary was wheeled in and while she was still in front of the house, the former President greeted her mother happy birthday, kissed her several times on the forehead and wished her good health and a longer life, to the applause of die-hard Estrada supporters.

The Estradas then went inside where they sang for Doña Mary the happy birthday song.

13-hour liberty

The 69-year-old Estrada early this week was allowed by the Sandiganbayan to attend the birthday of Doña Mary.

Under the court order, Estrada was to stay for 13 hours at his Polk residence after which he was to be returned to his detention at his rest house in Tanay, Rizal, where he is held on plunder and perjury charges.

Estrada's lawyers are seeking an extension of his furlough, the latest of several granted the deposed leader by the court since his arrest in April 2001.

Staff in tears

Estrada arrived shortly before 10:30 a.m. escorted by Chief Supt. Edgardo Doromal, PNP security director, and Sandiganbayan Sheriff Ed Urieta.

His household staff, some of whom were crying, met Estrada and he warmly greeted them.

Ramos said Estrada brought with him assortments of vegetables for his mother, which the former President himself harvested from his vegetable patch in his rest house.

Trial reset for tomorrow

Doña Mary arrived at about noon in a black Mercedes-Benz limousine driven by Jude Ejercito, her grandson.

Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice and Special Division Chair Teresita Leonardo de Castro and Associate Justices Francisco Villaluz Jr. and Diosdado Peralta agreed to allow Estrada to attend his mother's birthday after Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio and the Philippine National Police posed no objections.

The anagraft court reset the hearing of Estrada's cases, originally scheduled for yesterday, to tomorrow.

Estrada's previous requests to be allowed to visit his home had been opposed by Villa-Ignacio.

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COLLADO, Ronald F.
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A Testimonial Dinner will be tendered by the MLQU Administration and Faculty of the School of Law, in honor of the successful examinees on May 9, 2006 at 7:00 p.m., Manila Peninsula Hotel, Ayalna Ave., Makati City.

Protests fail to stop Korean shipyard

SUBIC, ZAMBALES—A SOUTH KOREAN shipping company on Tuesday proceeded with the groundbreaking ceremony for the country's biggest shipyard facility here amid protests from village residents who refused to leave the project site.

Officials of Hanjin Heavy Industries and Construction Co. Ltd. and the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) led the ceremony, which signaled the start of the shipyard's construction.

Nam Ho Cho, Hanjin chair, said the construction of the facility showed the strong business ties between South Korea and the Philippines. The project

is expected to provide at least 20,000 jobs for Filipino skilled workers.

Gov. Vicente Magsaysay said he was optimistic that the project would continue despite difficulties in clearing the area after villagers opted to stay and stop the demolition of their houses.

"We made it sure that the community in the project site would not be hostile to the Korean company," Magsaysay said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo was scheduled to attend the ceremony, but she reportedly cancelled the engagement after learning that the construction site had not been cleared.

"It might have come to the President's knowledge that the clearing operation had not been fully implemented in the area," Magsaysay said, referring to Ms Arroyo's absence.

But the governor assured officials of the South Korean firm

that Ms Arroyo was supporting the project.

Residents in Sitio Agusuhin have continued to defy the clearing operations, claiming that Hanjin failed to give them just compensation and a proper relocation site.

At least 300 families will be displaced by the project.

Two persons, including a 5-year-old girl, were hurt on Saturday after they refused to leave their house while it was being demolished.

Lawyer Ramon Agregado, SBMA senior deputy administrator for support services, said the affected settlers here would be compensated and given jobs during the project's construction.

Agregado urged settlers to leave their houses and transfer to a temporary evacuation site in the town. Allan Macatuno, PDI Central Luzon Desk



SEA REST

Fishermen call it a day and rest in their fishing boat docked in Punta Dumanag in Davao City. The fishermen were repairing their boat to set sail for deeper waters.

DENNIS P. SANTOS/PI DINDANAO BUREAU

Talks with MILF resume in Malaysia

By Jeoffrey Maitem
PDI Mindanao Bureau

COTABATO CITY—GOVERNMENT and Moro Islamic Liberation Front negotiators resumed talks in Kuala Lumpur on Tuesday, a top rebel leader said yesterday.

Ghazali Jaafar, MILF political affairs chief, told the Inquirer that the new round of exploratory talks would center anew on defining the scope of the ancestral domain claim of the MILF.

Under the Tripoli Agreement of 2001, the government agrees in principle to define the ances-

trial domain of the Moro people to determine which areas are included in a future political settlement with the rebel group.

In March, negotiators from both sides tried but failed to resolve the issue, which is seen as the biggest stumbling block to a final peace settlement that would lead to an end to the MILF struggle for secession.

"We are optimistic that the meeting will have a good result," Jaafar said.

Earlier, government chief negotiator Silvestre Afable said a peace agreement might be

reached with the MILF by September.

Jaafar said the issue on Charter change was not part of the agenda when the negotiating panels met in the Malaysian capital.

It was Jesus Dureza, President Macapagal-Arroyo's peace adviser, who claimed that the Charter change move and its impact on peace negotiations would be discussed with the various rebel groups.

Citing the implications of a parliament governing federated states, Dureza said all rebel groups would be briefed about

potential changes in the bureaucracy when the Constitution is overhauled.

On the issue of ancestral domain, Dureza said there was an effort from the government to strike an agreement with the MILF. "We are working on it," he said.

A ceasefire agreement be-

tween the government and the MILF is holding despite periodic clashes between government soldiers and separatist guerrillas.

An international team is mon-

itoring the two sides' compli-

ance with the agreement.

Franklin Caliguid and Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Albay hosts Lion confab

LEGAZPI CITY—Some 4,000 delegates from various Lions Clubs all over the country are expected to converge here for their Multi-District State Convention on May 18-21, in time for the Daragang Magayon Festival in Albay. Lions Club host chapter secretary Angel Nieva said Gov. Fernando Gonzales, through an Executive Order requested by the Sangganiwan Panalawigan, has declared May 18-24 as Lions Week in Albay to give due recognition and hospitality to the civic club's national convention here.

Edgar Alejo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

2 killed in blast in Cadiz

BACOLOD CITY—Two persons were killed in a grenade explosion Saturday in Barangay Celestino Villacin, Cadiz City. Police said the fatalities, Richard Gallego and his friend, Arnel Decosta, were on their way home from a benefit dance when the explosion took place. Police have yet to determine where the grenade came from, but reports said it was allegedly owned by Gallego, who was drunk when the accident took place. The victims, whose bodies were almost beyond recognition, were buried on Sunday by their respective families.

Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

Iron fortified rice in GenSan

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—The Bureau of Food and Drugs approved on the second week of April the license to operate of CLG Health Food Products, a manufacturer of iron fortificant. Jay Mariano, marketing manager of CLG Food Products, told the Inquirer that the company's P10-million processing plant here had been operating since January, but did not go into commercial production of iron-fortified rice pending the BFAD's approval of its ITO application. Mariano added the approval would help address iron deficiency anemia (IDA), particularly among children coming from poor families. He said 66 percent of children born in 2003 nationwide suffered from IDA. He said this was alarming because iron, vitamin A and iodine deficiencies, which are common among children coming from poor families, would result in the children's low IQ. By fortifying rice with iron, the staple food would not only be delicious but also nutritious.

Aquiles Zonia, PDI Mindanao Bureau



Int'l groups probe abuses in 3 RP areas

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—AN INTERNATIONAL Labor Solidarity mission (ILS) is in Negros Occidental to document cases of human rights violations committed in the province, including the killing and abduction of farm workers and their leaders.

The 30-member multinational ILS mission in the Philippines has split into four groups with one going to Negros Occidental, and the three others to Davao, Central Luzon and Southern Tagalog, Negros team member Sad de Guzman of Canada said.

Kris Geuns of Belgium, who is

also part of the Negros team, said they decided to come to the Philippines because the number of killings in the country "is very high, it is second only to Colombia."

"Although there is no proof and direct link between the killings and the policy of the (Philippine) government ... [the] government creates a climate that makes it possible for these killings to happen," Geuns said.

The latest killings in Negros Occidental involved Roco Adeva, 39, a leader-organizer of the peasant group Task Force Mapalad (TFM), who was shot dead in Talisay City on April 15, and Porfirio Maglasang, chair of the Pamibansang

Katipunan ng Makabayan Magbubulod (PKMM) chapter in Kabankalan City, who was killed outside his home in Barangay Camanis exactly a week later, on April 22.

Peasant leader Eric Cabanat

was killed in Davao City. The murder drew the attention of international human rights organizations.

Geuns said that while ILS members had no legal power to investigate, they had the moral right to determine the causes of human rights violations.

"We are documenting what has happened to bring attention to it locally and internationally by generating public opinion to get some results," he said.

Earlier, government chief negotiator Silvestre Afable said a peace agreement might be

reached with the MILF by September.

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An international team is mon-

itoring the two sides' compli-

ance with the agreement.

Franklin Caliguid and Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau

'Jueteng' return to Isabela gets protection from gov't exec



ILAGAN, ISABELA—THE ILLEGAL numbers game "jueteng" has returned to some Isabela towns after a two-year absence, local officials said.

Gamay Mayor Fernando Cumagad said a local government official was behind the resumption of jueteng operations in the province. He declined to name the official.

He said "dry-run" operations started on April 28 and went full blast on April 30. Alicia Mayor Napoleon Dy, president

of the Isabela Mayors' League, said emissaries of one Jun Marasigan had been getting the mayors' approval for the resumption of jueteng in the province.

But Dy said many mayors had rejected the offers.

"[But] for mayors who allow [jueteng operations in their areas], that is their own decision and discretion. I cannot do anything about that," he said.

Senior Supt. Oscar Fiesta, acting provincial police director,

said he would order police chiefs in Isabela to arrest jueteng bet collectors and their financiers.

Cumagad and Mayors Joseph Pangalan of Angadan town and Benedict Calderon of Roxas town said they had not received reports of jueteng operations in their respective towns.

Vice Gov. Ramon Reyes and Board Member Jesus Cruz Jr. earlier confirmed reports on the resumption of jueteng operations.

Cruz said draws were held in a

village in Ilagan town on the first day of dry run operations. He said residents in the town informed him that the combination 5-23 won in the morning draw.

Police tightened the noose around jueteng operations following allegations in the Senate that members of the family of President Macapagal-Arroyo were receiving payoffs from illegal gambling lords, an allegation that the governor denied.

First Gentleman Mike Arroyo and the First Couple's

son, Rep. Mike Arroyo have denied accusations that they were receiving payoffs from jueteng.

The Senate committee investigating the allegations, however, has not finished a report on its hearings on jueteng and failed to call Batangas Gov. Armand Sanchez, who was identified by a witness in the hearings as one of the country's biggest gambling lords, an allegation that the governor denied.

Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Elder's search for Japanese roots leads to better lives

By Juan Escandor Jr.
Minalabac, Camarines Sur

DOMINGO SASAKI SAN Lorenzo, 67, an elder of the Jehovah's Witnesses in Minalabac, Camarines Sur, shows no bitterness about the adversities he had encountered in the past.

The youngest of four children of Marcelina San Lorenzo, Domingo lost his father, Takezo Sasaki, who died in their two-story house in Tabuco, Naga City when American planes bombed the capital on May 1, 1942. Domingo was then only 3 years old.

After the defeat of Japanese soldiers in World War II, Domingo's family experienced poverty for the first time. His mother struggled hard to earn a living so the children could finish high school.

To avoid ridicule and persecution after the war because of his Japanese ancestry, the family members did not use Sasaki as surname.

But by a twist of fate or what he believes to be God's hand leading him along life's uncharted pathways, Domingo found an opportunity to "reclaim" the surname deprived of his family for many years.

That was in 1974, or 32 years after the war, when Domingo was installing a doorbell at the house of a client-friend in Naga as a part-time job.

He was introduced to Nobuo Fukazawa, a Japanese and chief of Bayer operations in the Philippines, who was staying at the house of his friend in Montebello Village, a middle-class subdivision in the city.

Engaged in a banter with the Japanese executive, Domingo shared his longing to reestablish links with his father's relatives in Japan, whose whereabouts his family in the Philippines had little knowledge of.

Fukazawa learned that the Japanese parliament had passed a law recognizing and bestowing citizenship on descendants of Japanese nationals and soldiers who died during the war. He asked Domingo to provide him proof of his Japanese ancestry to help him lo-



cate the Sasaki in Japan.

Domingo returned the following day and gave Fukazawa his father's full identity, photo and marriage contract.

In just two weeks after the business executive left for Japan, Domingo received a telegram from the Japanese Embassy informing him that a round-trip ticket and travel money had been sent by his relatives to him through its Manila office.

He flew to Japan on the same month that the ticket and invitation arrived.

Touching reunion

"I arrived at the Narita Airport in 1974, overwhelmed with emotion [when] I saw my relatives waving placards bearing my name," Domingo recounted.

He passed out for a second or so, before he could even greet his grandparents, other next of kin and everyone else who welcomed him. His Japanese male relatives were quick to catch him before he slipped on the airport lobby. He was brought to a waiting car where he regained consciousness.

Later, he found out through his Japanese relatives, that the search for his father's family in Japan was broadcast on national television, using grabs of the photos and other documents he had given Fukazawa.

At 35, Domingo came to know more about his father, this time from the

Japanese relatives.

Takezo, the father he knew only through countless tales from his mother, was the eldest in a brood of six children. He was born on May 6, 1899. Seeking fortune and adventure outside Japan, Takezo, then 15 years old, went to the Philippines in 1914. In 1924, he returned to his homeland in what would turn out to be the last time his family would see him alive. He decided to return to the Philippines and settle there. In Manila, he studied English and Spanish, and became conversant in Filipino as part of efforts to establish his residency and work status in his adopted country.

In the early 1920s, he moved to Naga and learned to speak Bicol.

He married Marcelina in a civil wedding on

TAKEZO Sasaki, the

patriarch of the

Sasaki clan in

Minalabac and

Mitaor, refused to

fight with Japanese

Imperial Army

against the attacking

Filipino guerrillas.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Takezo, the father he knew only through countless tales from his mother, was the eldest in a brood of six children. He was born on May 6, 1899.

Seeking fortune and adventure outside Japan, Takezo, then 15 years old, went to the Philippines in 1914. In 1924, he returned to his homeland in what would turn out to be the last time his family would see him alive. He decided to return to the Philippines and settle there.

In Manila, he studied English and Spanish, and became conversant in Filipino as part of efforts to establish his residency and work status in his adopted country.

In the early 1920s, he moved to Naga and learned to speak Bicol.

He married Marcelina in a civil wedding on



DOMINGO Sasaki San Lorenzo (male, with glasses) poses with his aunt and relatives the first time he met them in 1974.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Domingo said 1974 was the most unforgettable period in his life when he was able to piece together his Japanese ancestry and help transform the lives of all members of the Sasaki clan in the Philippines.

Being of Japanese descent, all clan members—the fourth generation—were given automatic recognition as *nikki-jin* or half-Japanese. They were entitled to live, stay and work in Japan for as long as they wanted.

The Sasaki descendants were issued a *konki* or certificate of birth's ancestry that bestowed on them preferential treatment on immigration concerns and made them distinct from other foreign nationals working in Japan.

Entry to Japan

It was in 1997 when the full benefits accorded to a *nikki-jin* started to make a difference as far as Domingo is concerned. The second-generation Sasaki started to emigrate to Japan to work.

Seventy clan members, including the spouses of his nephews and nieces, were employed there, he said.

At present, all of Domingo's three children work in Japan. He and his wife take care of their grandchildren in Minalabac.

"I have a pension and our personal and domestic needs are provided by my children. Periodically, I visit my children and Japanese relatives," Domingo said.

His eldest daughter Emmy, who is on vacation in their hometown, explained that she did not intend to become a permanent resident in Japan.

She said her siblings just wanted to work there and earn at least more than thrice the salary an ordinary employee receives in the Philippines. "It's a very expensive place and you only go there to work, earn and save for the future," she said.

Domingo said he thanked God for the blessings because the opportunity for his family to work in Japan had given them a comfortable life he could not imagine that he could provide himself.

In the early years of his married life, he worked as a salesman of Radioworld appliances. He also took on part-time jobs to augment his income.

Mayor Gil Basmayor, who knew the Sasaki clan, attested to Domingo's family as belonging to one of the poorest families in town.

The landscape of Barangays Hubo and Antipolo where they live changed when they became *nikki-jin*, said Basmayor.

Not so long ago, the Sasaki lived in humble shacks in the villages where they worked as farm laborers or tenants in rice farms.

It was, however, the legacy left behind by his father, a Japanese war hero, whose imprint is etched deep in Domingo's memories. His mother, who lived with him until she died at the age of 80, would have probably agreed.



DOMINGO Sasaki San Lorenzo, 67, can now afford a smile with the basics in life and simple luxury within reach because of his Japanese roots.

JUAN ESCANDOR JR.

Feb. 6, 1928 and engaged in a buy-and-sell business in Tabuco, providing his family a comfortable life.

Lourdes San Lorenzo Oliva, 70, Domingo's older sister and the third child of Takezo, said his father managed to maintain frequent communication with his relatives in Japan. She said their father never failed to radio his parents in Japan every time a new baby was born.

All of his children were recorded in the family annals of the Sasaki in Hiroshima.

The couple had electricity in the house and a powerful radio transmitter until the war broke out in 1941.

Translator

During the Japanese occupation of the Philippines, Takezo became a translator of the Japanese Imperial Army and rendered military duty as guard of the Japanese garrison where captured and suspected guerrillas and their supporters were imprisoned and tortured.

Domingo said his mother recounted how Takezo refused to go to the guerrilla camp in Moriones, Ocampo, Camarines Sur when he fled the American aerial bombardment.

"My father told my mother that he did not want his Japanese compatriots to see him as a traitor if he accepted the safe conduct pass and refuge offered by his Bicolano friend, a guerrilla commander by the name of Tacorda," he said.

"This guerrilla opened an opportunity for my father and the family, even as my father was in the service of the Japanese Imperial Army," he added.

But Takezo had other things in mind. He wanted to die in dignity.

"He believed that if he were with us, he would have endangered his entire family. So he chose to stay in our house and waited for his death," Domingo recalled.

Takezo's charred remains were retrieved by his compatriots, brought to Japan and buried in a shrine dedicated to Japanese war heroes in Hiroshima in the 1940s.

Relatives of 'NPA rebels' arrested by cops appeal to GMA

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
Tagaytay City

HUGGED BY THEIR MOTHER, the two girls, aged 2 and 3 years old, were both crying while asking for their father, whom they last saw on Friday before he left their house in Barangay Tolentino East in Tagaytay City in Cavite.

"Our children are always crying. They have been asking for their father," said Sherill Masayes, 29, who was also in tears.

Government troops arrested Michael Masayes on Friday on suspicion that he was a New People's Army guerrilla.

Just like the Masayes kids, the family of Rico Ybañez was still in shock after seeing him handcuffed in a flash report on ABS-CBN. He was held by police as another rebel.

"My sick mother is always in tears. She's always waiting for words on the whereabouts of my father," Enmar, Ybañez's eldest son, said.

The families of Ybañez, 59, and Masayes, 29, have appealed to Presi-

dent Macapagal-Arroyo and police officials to immediately release the two.

"My husband is not an NPA member," Sherill wanted to tell the President.

"We want to work for their release but we don't even know where they are. We've been to Camp Crame, but we were told by police that they are not there. They instead referred us to the Canlubang police camp," Enmar said.

The families strongly denied that the two are communist guerrillas.

"He's not a subversive. My father maintains a pineapple plantation for a living," said Enmar.

Ybañez and Masayes, both of Barangay Tolentino East in Tagaytay, treat each other like father and son. Both are cockfighting aficionados, according to barangay residents.

Gamblers

"They are both gambling hustlers but definitely not NPA members," said a former village official.

Masayes is also a caretaker of fighting cocks and acts as cockpit "cris." The two families swore that the gam-

bling buddies were not members of any leftist organization.

According to Enmar, a person arrived in their house on Friday afternoon and rented their Lancer car for a trip in the nearby Talisay City in Batangas.

Sherill said Ybañez dropped by their house and picked up Masayes to serve as his companion in the trip back to Tagaytay.

"Before he left, he even asked me to cook his favorite pork adobo for dinner. But they never came back until we received the information that they were arrested," she said.

On Sunday the human rights group Karapatan-Southern Tagalog reported that two Cavite peasant activists and three Batangas farmers had been missing in the boundary of Tagaytay and Batangas province.

Police presentation

The next day, police reported the arrest in Tagaytay of six suspected NPA members who had allegedly planned to sabotage Monday's celebration of Labor Day.

The police presentation

Ybañez and Masayes were presented by police as two of the suspects. Also arrested were Aris Samiento, Marvin Galang, Axel Alejandro Pinpin and Riel Custodio.

Allegedly recovered from the group were antigovernment documents lifted from two laptop computers and flash disks, maps, assorted receipts allegedly representing the purchase of improvised explosive component, and mobile phones.

Laura, wife of Samiento, said police had not allowed them to see or talk with her husband. She appealed to authorities to allow the suspects to defend themselves.

Cavite Rep. Jesus Crispin Remulla attested that three of the five arrested men were legitimate peasant leaders in his district.

Remulla raised doubts over the claims of the police and the Navy Intelligence group that Pinpin, Custodio and Samiento were collared after attending a meeting with other communist rebels in Tagaytay.

The three were held together with

Ybañez and Masayes at about 6 a.m. last Friday.

Peasant leaders

But Remulla said he could vouch that the arrested men were leaders of the Kalipunan ng mga Magbubukid sa Kabite (Kamagsasaka-Ka), the provincial chapter of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP).

Remulla admitted that he was close to Pinpin, a former information officer of Kamagsasaka-Ka and that Pinpin's group helped him in the 2004 elections.

"I know personally Antoy because he used to ask for my help in their advocacy for the farmers. I even gave their office a computer," he added.

Remulla, who represents the province's third district, which is largely agricultural, is also known to be an ardent supporter and advocate of farmers' rights in Cavite.

Supt. Rodel Sermonia, Cavite police intelligence chief, said the arrested men were indeed leaders of a farmers' group in the province. With a report from Marlon Ramos



"Ayaw ko
ng flying KISS,
gusto ko
tips to lips."

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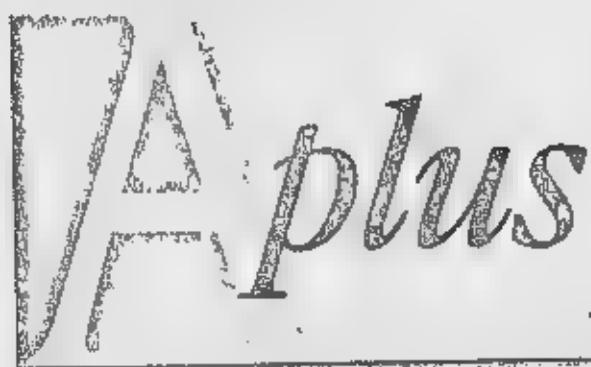
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Editor Ester G. Dipasupil

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WHAT'S INSIDE

■ Manhunt on
for 5 suspects in casino
financier's slay

/A18

■ Vendor tags accused cop
in Dacer-Corbito
double murder case

/A18

■ Manila set
to break Guinness
breastfeeding record

/A18



DESPITE petitions from transport groups for an increase, the LTFRB will stick to its policy of maintaining current fare prices, while watching out for a rise in diesel prices. AP

LTFRB rules out fare increase

Agency to monitor diesel cost

By Alcuin Papa

THE LAND TRANSPORTATION FRANCHISING Regulatory Board (LTFRB) yesterday ruled out any fare increase until diesel pump prices reach P35 per liter.

And even if prices do reach the P35 level, LTFRB chair Ma. Elena Bautista stressed that this does not mean that she would automatically approve pending petitions for fare hikes as she would have to first study the possible effects and repercussions of such a move.

Diesel now costs P32.79 to P34.32 per liter as Shell, Petron, Chevron Philippines, Total and Unioil raised their pump prices by 50 centavos per liter on April 30.

Bautista told reporters at the Fernandina Forum in Greenhills, San Juan, that her agency was not likely to entertain any fare hike petition at the moment, in line with the government's policy of keeping transport fares at their present level.

Adding that a fare raise was not the answer to spiraling oil prices worldwide, Bautista said the government has already prepared several measures to cushion the ef-

fect of rising oil prices worldwide. These include the use of alternative fuel and the possible suspension of tariff rates imposed on petroleum products.

Transport groups had earlier warned commuters that they would seek a fare hike following a series of fuel price hikes implemented by local oil firms.

Among the groups which had filed a petition with the LTFRB were the Philippine Confederation of Drivers and Operators-Alliance of Concerned Transport Organization which is seeking an increase of P1.50, and the United Transport Coalition, which has asked for a hike of P1.25.

Other groups with pending petitions are the Federation of Jeepney Operators and Drivers Association of the Philippines, the Alliance of Transport Operators and Drivers Association of the Philippines, Makati Jeepney Operators and Drivers Alliance, and the National Transport Workers Union (NTWU).

Operators of air-conditioned buses have also asked for a P2 increase while ordinary bus operators are seeking a 90-centavo adjustment.

'Pink Cloth' picks up steam

By Tarra V. Quismundo

A TRAFFIC ENFORCER OF THE METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority was summoned by Angelito Vergel de Dios, the agency's Traffic Operations Center director, after he failed to implement the "Pink Cloth" traffic scheme during rush hour near the Magallanes Interchange in Makati City.

Vergel de Dios said he immediately asked Paustino Vecino for an explanation after receiving a complaint from a commuter.

"There have been no other complaints except this one. The commuter was upset by the delay, saying that she waited for almost 30 minutes before she was able to get a ride. That's why she scolded the enforcer for not implementing the pink cloth scheme," the MMDA official added.

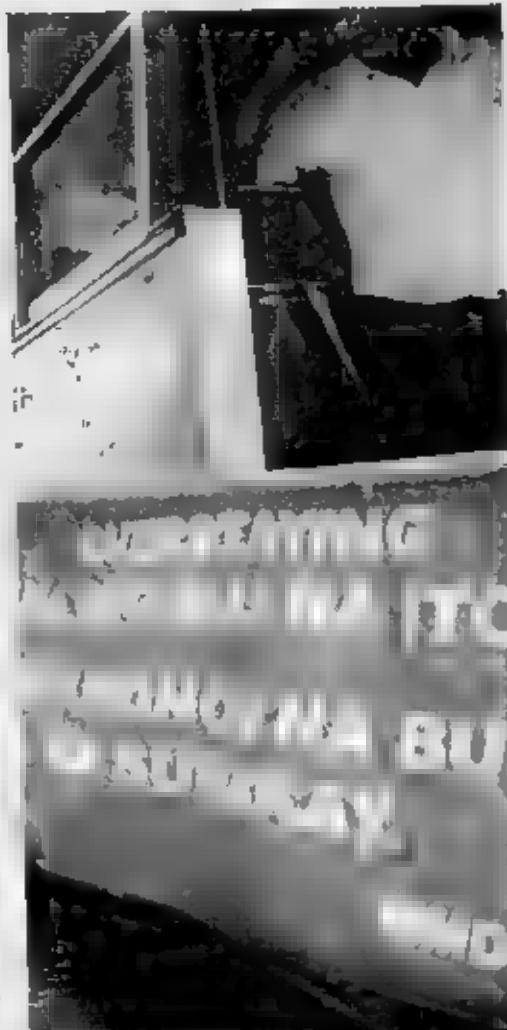
Vergel de Dios, meanwhile, said the incident indicated that a lot of people knew about the MMDA's latest campaign to instill discipline in bus drivers plying Edsa.

"There's already an awareness about it because of the publicity," he said.

The "Pink Cloth" scheme is aimed at discouraging bus drivers from hogging loading points for passengers along Edsa.

Under the scheme, MMDA traffic enforcers raise a pole with a pink cloth attached to it in front of bus doors to prevent more passengers from boarding.

The campaign was first implemented in Cubao, Quezon City, last week, followed by the southbound lane of Edsa near Ayala Avenue in Makati City, both sides of Edsa near North Avenue in Quezon City, and the Magallanes Interchange.



WAVING the pink flag at Cubao: An experiment in traffic discipline

AIM ASIAN CENTER FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP

ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE REAL ESTATE INDUSTRY

Schedule: May 22 - 26, 2006

COURSE OVERVIEW/ OBJECTIVES:

A five-day program that brings together key leaders of the Philippine Real Estate Industry to:

- Present current trends and prospects in the Philippine Real Estate Industry; and
- Provide participants with a workable framework for identifying, screening and evaluating entrepreneurial opportunities in the Philippine real estate industry.

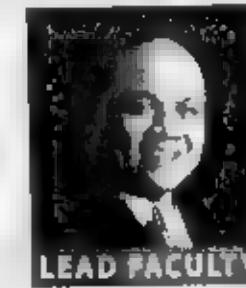
COURSE COVERAGE:

- a. Business prospects in various real estate products: residential, commercial, retail, leisure, farms, memorial parks, hotels and others
- b. Business prospects in real estate services: planning, project management, marketing and sales, leasing, and property management
- c. Business arising from bank acquired assets
- d. Development of analytical frameworks to help scan, assess and implement identified opportunities in the Philippine real estate industry

COURSE CONTENT:

- External Assessment / Industry Analysis
 - Framework on Opportunity Seeking, Screening & Assessment
 - Framework for Strategizing
 - Micro Market Analysis
- Opportunities in the Various Real Estate Industry Sub-Sectors
 - Residential
 - Office and Commercial
 - Shopping Center
 - Leisure, Resort and Farm
 - Memorial Parks
 - Hotel
- Opportunities in Real Estate Services:
 - Master Planning and Design
 - Contracting
 - Sales and Marketing
 - Property Management
 - Financial Packaging and Investments in Property Projects

The faculty for this course, which is participated in by key industry players, is led by Professor Danilo A. Antonio, a current member of the Asian Center for Entrepreneurship (ACE) core faculty as a Guru in the Master in Entrepreneurship (ME) Program



Prof. Antonio also teaches the Development of Enterprise (DE) and Real Estate/Property Management and Finance electives under the Master in Business Administration Program.

Prof. Antonio remains active in various business endeavors, particularly in the Philippine Real Estate Industry, where he has accumulated over 27 years of experience in various aspects of the property business. He is CEO and founder of LAND-EXCEL Consulting, CEO of Phoenix Land Inc., developer of Las Haciendas Resort Farms, CEO of Excelsis Land, developer of Desta & Madison South residential villages and Chairman of Canyon Woods Resort Club.

Prof. Antonio holds a Master in Business Management degree (With Distinction) from the Asian Institute of Management (1978) and a Bachelor of Arts in Economics Degree (Summa Cum Laude) from De La Salle University (1974).

EQUIS
ACCREDITED

Manhunt on for 5 in financier's slay

NBI to ask for suspects' expatriation

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION has launched a manhunt for five Chinese allegedly involved in the death of a casino financier late last year.

NBI Special Task Force chief Reynaldo Esmeralda yesterday said that arrest warrants had been issued for Lee Wei Jiang or Anthony Lee, Hua Hong or Xiao Peng, Huang Cheng De or Ott, William Go, and Yun Yao Feng. The five are from mainland China.

A sixth suspect, Allan Mendoza, was arrested shortly after Shu Bun Tok, or Emerson Sy, was found dead on Diosdado Macapagal Avenue in Pasay City last December 1.

"We have information that the suspects fled to China after the incident," Esmeralda told reporters.

Esmeralda said that if the Bureau of Immigration confirms that the suspects had indeed left the country, the NBI would file a request for their extradition in the Department of Justice.

The NBI official said the motive for the killing appeared to be a fight between Sy and Lee over control of the casino.

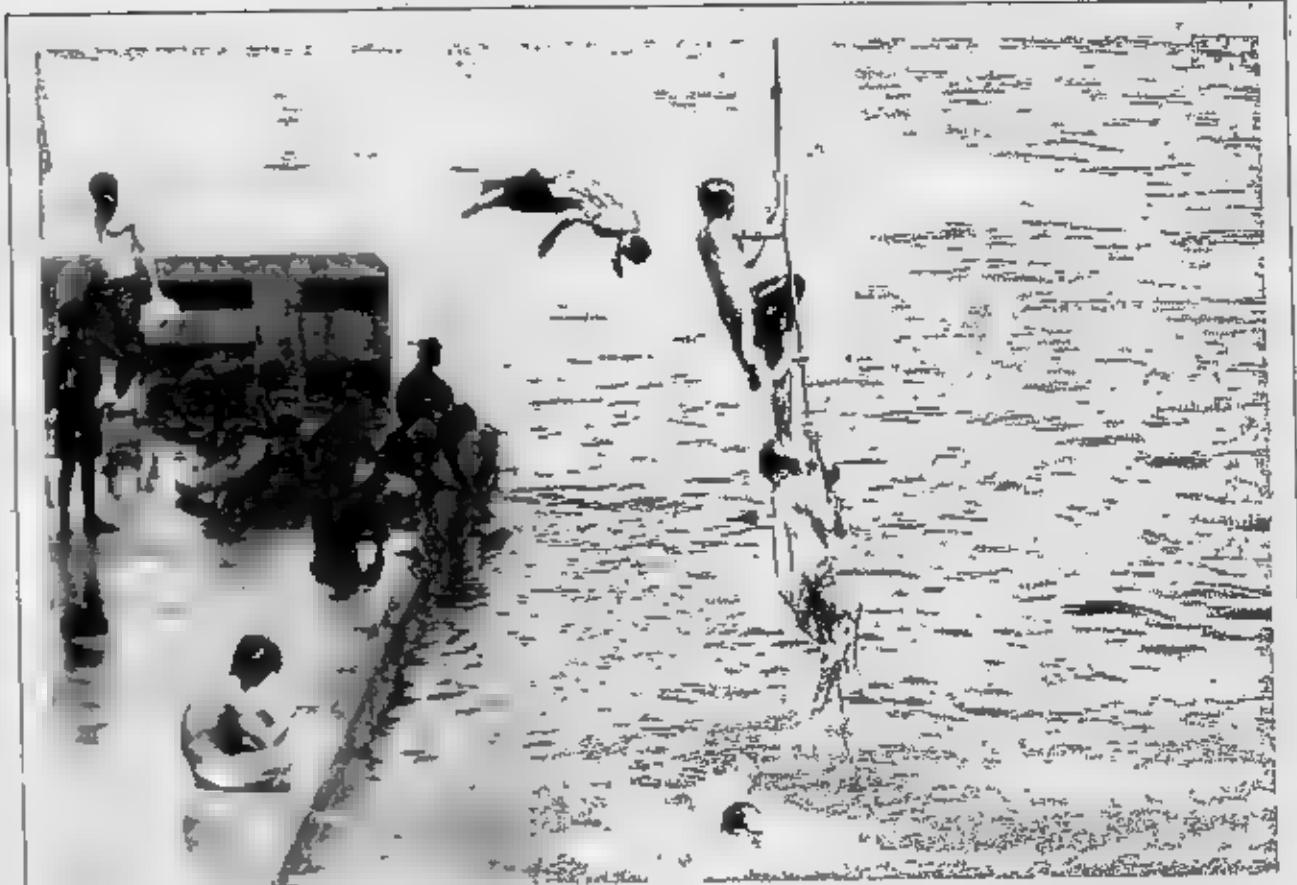
Like Sy, Lee was also a financier, lending money to people who gambled in casinos. The four other Chinese, including Mendoza, worked for Lee. "Their squabbles apparently involved millions of pesos," Esmeralda said.

The NBI STF chief said that Sy, a financier at the Grand Hyatt Hotel and Casino in Manila, arrived at the Pan Pacific Hotel KTV bar on Nov. 30 for a drinking spree with several Chinese businessmen.

While Sy was asleep, Lee allegedly grabbed the victim's bag which contained P200,000 and ordered his men to instead Sy's bodyguards so that they would leave the premises.

The suspects then brought Sy to a gray Honda Civic car driven by Mendoza.

The NBI STF chief said that during investigation, Mendoza admitted that Hua slit the victim's throat while he drove the car toward Macapagal Avenue where they allegedly dumped the victim's body.



STILL HOT

A boy dives while his companions swing from a rope before taking the plunge into the Pasig River to get relief from the heat. Summer may be nearly over, according to the weather bureau, but the temperature continues to

Military camp a restricted area

I MAY BE A JOURNALIST BUT I can't disagree with the orders of Gen. Generoso Senga, Armed Forces chief of staff, restricting the movements of reporters inside Camp Aguinaldo.

Reporters are now allowed only in the vicinity of the AFP Public Information Office and the Defense Press Corps office.

Camp Aguinaldo, AFP general headquarters, is a military camp. And a military camp is a restricted area, meaning, not all places

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo



in it are accessible to civilians and unauthorized military personnel.

In the same way, the Pentagon, headquarters of the US armed forces, is a highly restricted area. American reporters assigned to

cover the Pentagon are not allowed in sensitive areas in the huge military building complex.

There are places in a military camp that cannot be shown to civilians for security reasons. Media people, being civilians, should understand this.

Our government should throw its full support behind a Filipino domestic helper in Saudi Arabia who chopped off the sex organ of her employer when he sexually assaulted her.

The Pinay was just defending her honor. Like most Filipino provincial lasses (most housemaids come from the provinces), she was acting true to form. Provincial maidens would rather die or kill than get defiled.

The unnamed maid is now in a

Saudi jail where conditions are worse than our jails. I've heard reports about Saudi guards sexually abusing both male and female inmates.

In several instances I have expressed no sympathy for our compatriots who ran afoul of the law in their host countries but who still were helped by our government. But this time around, this writer is appealing to our government to move heaven and earth to have the Filipino maid freed from detention and sent home immediately.

I wonder when we Filipinos will see the day when we stop sending our compatriots to work in countries where they are treated much like the African slaves in America in the 1700s.

Vendor tags policeman in Dacer-Corbito case

A POLICEMAN ACCUSED OF INVOLVEMENT in the Dacer-Corbito double murder case was positively identified yesterday by a witness as the man who had opened the door of the victim's white Toyota Revo in November 2000.

Willy Caboquin, 28, a sidewalk vendor from Makati City, tagged SPO4 Manno Soberano when he testified during a hearing held at the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 18.

Soberano and four other policemen formerly assigned with the defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PACCTF), along with five civilian agents, have been charged with abducting and killing public

east Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver, Emmanuel Corbito.

Caboquin recounted that at around 11 a.m. on Nov. 24, 2002, he saw a white car overtake a white Toyota Revo at the corner of Osmeña Highway and Zobel Roxas Street.

He said he saw a policeman, whom he later identified as Soberano, alight from the white car and knock on the driver's window. Soberano then opened the van's door, forced the driver to alight from the Revo and get into another car. "I saw the vehicles travel south, traversing on the Buendia flyover," Caboquin said in Filipino. Margaux C. Ortiz

Manila set to top Guinness breastfeeding record

By Margaux C. Ortiz

READY, GET SET, NURSE!

Some 5,000 nursing mothers will gather in the City of Manila at 9 a.m. today to break the Guinness World Record on simultaneous breastfeeding.

The record-setting event will be held at the San Andres Sports Complex in Malate.

"This project is aimed at instilling the importance of breastfeeding as well as its health benefits," Mayor Lito Aierenza said in a statement.

The current world record for the most number of women who participated in simultaneous breastfeeding is held by the City

of Berkeley Women Infants Children Program in California. The organization was able to gather 1,130 mothers on Aug. 3, 2002 to set a record.

According to World Health Organization Philippines, 16,000 Filipino children die each year because of bottle-feeding while many others suffer from allergies and long-term illnesses such as juvenile hypertension, heart disease, diabetes, cancer and premature puberty "because of the formula milk menace."

Today's event will also emphasize the recommendation that children should be breastfed exclusively until they are six months old.

Republic of the Philippines
MANILA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY
MIAA Administration Building, MIA Road, Pasay City, Metro Manila

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Notice is hereby given that Official Receipts Nos. 301851 - 301900 of the Manila International Airport Authority have been reported missing.

The public is therefore warned that any transaction entered into by anyone or any entity using these receipts will not be honored by this Office.

We advise the public to report to the MIAA authorities any person/s or entity representing themselves as agents of this Office. Please call telephone numbers 8771109 loc. 3180 or 8771744 for this purpose.

(PDI - May 4 & 11, 2006)

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The PHILIPPINE INTERNATIONAL TRADING CORPORATION BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE (PITC-BAC), invites Contractors with valid PCAB License registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) with CNA Registration of at least Small II to apply for bidding and to be eligible to bid for the hereinunder project:

Name of the Project : Wall Construction for Proposed Pasobolong-2

Production Well.

Pasobolong 2 Production Well

Wall Construction for Proposed Pasobolong-2

Production Well to Include Well

Exploration and Well Development

P1,650,600.00

Contract Duration : 84 Working Days upon issuance of

Notice to Proceed

Prospective Contractors shall possess a valid PCAB License with a

Registration Particular in Water Supply, had undertaken a similar project

with an amount of 50% of the proposed project for the bidding, and have

key personnel and equipment owned, leased, or under purchase available

for prosecution of the project. The list of minimum equipment requirements

indicated in the Eligibility Forms. The BAC shall use a non-discretionary

pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Checking/Screening as well as in the

Preliminary Examination of Bids. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated

bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security

Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conferences shall be governed by the

pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and

Regulations (IRR).

The complete activities are listed:

BAC ACTIVITIES Schedule

1 Submission of Letter of Intent (LOI) including April 26 to

May 5, 2006

2 Issuance of Eligibility Forms May 2 to 5, 2006

3 Submission of Eligibility Requirements May 8 to 12, 2006

4 Submission of Results of Eligibility Check May 15, 2006

5 Issuance of Bid Documents May 16 to 19, 2006

6 Pre-Bid Conference May 24, 2006

7 Submission and Opening of Bids June 7, 2006

The Eligibility Forms will be available at the 3rd Floor, Zamboanga City Water District, Pilar St., Zamboanga City, upon their submission of Letter of Intent, and upon payment of a non-refundable amount of One Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P1,500.00), to the Zamboanga City Water District Cashier Substation and results of eligibility shall be in the same office.

Bid Documents will be available only to Eligible Bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Fifteen Thousand Pesos (P15,000.00) to the

Zamboanga City Water District Cashier.

The Zamboanga City Water District assumes no responsibility whatsoever to

compensate or indemnify bidder for any expenses incurred in the preparation

of their bids.

(Sgd.) ALEJO S. ROJAS, JR.

BAC II Chairman

(PDI - May 4, 2006)

Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)

Contract Duration : Sixty (60) Calendar Days

The PITC-BAC calls for the submission of Letters of Intent (LOI) from interested Bidders to apply for bidding and its implementation.

Submitting Bidders shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and

Regulations (IRR).

The BAC will issue to interested bidders, Eligible Forms/Documents at the 4th Floor MDC Building, Tandang Sora Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City on May 16, 2006 at 8:00 am.

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Berlusconi resigns as Italian premier; Prodi to take over

ROME—PRIME MINISTER SILVIO Berlusconi formally handed in his resignation Tuesday after five turbulent years at the helm of Italian politics, paving the way for a new center-left government under Romano Prodi.

The flamboyant conservative leader submitted his resignation to President Carlo Azeglio Ciampi following last month's defeat to Prodi's coalition in the closest general election in living memory.

In a statement, Ciampi's office said Berlusconi "submitted his resignation from the government he heads" and had been asked by the president "to stay in charge to handle current affairs."

The resignation of 69-year-old Berlusconi, Italy's longest-serving premier since World War II, now opens the way for Prodi to take over.

Ciampi, 85, whose presidential mandate runs out May 18, must decide whether to appoint Prodi or leave it to his successor.

The decision could come earlier than expected, since the new speaker of the chamber of deputies set a May 8 date for the election of the new president.

That decision will be made in a plenary session grouping the two chambers of parliament and representatives of the country's 20 regions. In the meantime, Prodi has been

continuing negotiations with his coalition—a fragile alliance stretching from communists to centrists—on the shape of his government.

The 66-year-old former European Commission chief said he wanted to be ready with a lineup by Thursday or Friday this week in case Ciampi decided quickly to appoint him and ask him to form a government.

He has already selected most of his ministers and key government appointees except for the portfolios of interior and defense, according to reports.

If Ciampi leaves to his successor a decision on appointing Prodi, it would extend the uncertainty by at least another week, leaving Italy facing the kind of institutional semi-paralysis it can ill afford.

Berlusconi had initially refused to recognize the results of the April 9-10 election until it was validated by the courts.

But he was left with no choice but to quit after the new parliament elected members from Prodi's coalition as speakers of the lower and upper houses.

Nevertheless, Berlusconi—renowned for his sharp tongue, persistent legal woes, pro-American stance, domination of the media and colossal wealth—has openly declared his aim of toppling the new government.

APP

Goal of immigration protests still elusive

WASHINGTON—THE NASCENT immigrant rights movement showed on Monday that it could build an organization, mobilize hundreds of thousands of people across the country and wield economic power.

But the protesters do not appear to have achieved their primary goal—changing votes in Congress. And some critics say the demonstration may have generated a backlash, hardening positions on Capitol Hill.

The protests, which began in March and resumed on Monday with a boycott of work, school and shops, have clearly grabbed the nation's attention when the issue of illegal immigration is high on the agenda in Washington.

The heightened attention will make it difficult for Congress to duck the question of what to do

with the estimated 11 million to 12 million people living illegally in the United States.

Although the outpouring has drawn comparisons to the civil rights movement of the 1960s, questions remain about whether the protesters can translate their passion into political results.

Some companies closed on Monday, yet it is too early to assess the economic effects of the boycott. The effects were diminished because many workers notified their employers ahead of time that they planned to take the day off.

Some advocates who support "comprehensive immigration reform," the idea that illegal workers should be put on a path to citizenship, say the protests have given that concept an important lift in the debate on Capitol Hill.

New York Times Service

WORLD BRIEFS

Iran threatens Israel

TEHRAN—Iran threatened on Tuesday to attack Israel in response to any "evil" act by the United States and said it had enriched uranium to a level close to the maximum compatible with civilian use in power stations. The defiant statements were issued shortly before world powers met in Paris late on Tuesday to plan their next moves after Tehran rejected a UN call to halt uranium enrichment. "We have announced that wherever America does something evil, the first place that we target will be Israel," ISNA quoted a senior Revolutionary Guards commander, Rear Adm. Mohammad-Ebrahim Dehqani, as saying on Tuesday. Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has called for the Jewish state to be "wiped off the map."

Top al-Qaida leader nabbed

KABUL—A top al-Qaida strategist with a US\$5-million bounty on his head and followers from Afghanistan to Europe has been captured in Pakistan, a US law enforcement official confirmed. Mustafa Setmarian Nasar, who once wrote a 1,600-page autobiographical book on ways to attack Islam's enemies, has been flown out of the country after being interrogated by Pakistani and American authorities, Pakistani officials told The Associated Press on Tuesday. They did not specify where he was taken. Terror analysts said Nasar's capture has dealt a blow to al-Qaida and other militant movements he aided through his virulent anti-Western writings and weapons training. His movements have been traced to Sudan, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Syria and two European capitals.

AP

2 German hostages freed in Iraq

BAGHDAD—Two German hostages were released in Iraq after a three-month ordeal. Berlin announced that the two gas engineers René Brauneck, 32, and Thomas Nitschke, 28, had been freed after they were seized outside a refinery in northern Iraq on Jan. 24. German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier said from Chile that he had spoken to the hostages and they were doing relatively well under the circumstances. The two were working for a German company when they were abducted, a few weeks after AP journalist Jill Carroll was abducted in Baghdad. She was released on March 30. The kidnappers of the Germans, who said they were members of a group called Ansar al-Tawhid wal Sunna (Followers of Unity and Prophetic Tradition), issued several demands to the German government in the past three months.

AP

Kyrgyz govt resigns en masse

BISHKEK—Kyrgyz President Kurmanbek Bakiyev refused Tuesday to accept the resignation en masse of the government, deepening political turmoil in the Central Asian republic a year after a popular revolt. The attempt by all 16 members of the government to resign followed a critical vote in parliament last week. The resignations also came amid mounting street protests and fears of politically inspired violence in the impoverished but strategically placed ex-Soviet republic, which hosts both Russian and US military bases. "The entire government resigned, but the president did not accept," Deputy Prime Minister Adakhan Madumarov said. "We consider we have not got the moral right to stay in our posts after the parliament's unsatisfactory evaluation of our work."

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Republic of the Philippines
GSC-GSC-016

PURCHASE OF VARIOUS OFFICE SUPPLIES

(Name of Project)

545 items of different office supplies (pls see details @ www.gensantos.gov.ph and www.procurementservice.gov.ph)

The Local Government Unit of General Santos City, through the CY 2006 Annual Budget intends to apply the sum of Three Million Two Hundred Fifty Three Thousand Eight Hundred Seventy Three Pesos and 33/100 (P3,253,023.33) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Various Office Supplies. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.

The Local Government Unit of General Santos now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the Purchase of Various Office Supplies. Delivery of the GOODS is required by the 30 calendar days. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pre-qualified criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 8104 (RA 8104), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (RA 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsive of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

Interested Eligible Bidders may obtain further information from the Local Government Unit of General Santos City and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Bidders that passed the eligibility check upon the presentation of the Notice of Eligibility to the BAC Secretariat, at the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P1,000.00 to the City Treasurer's Office. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the bidder or his authorized representative.

The Local Government Unit of General Santos City will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested on May 16, 2006, 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon at the BAC Office, 2nd Floor, Right Wing, City Hall Building, General Santos City.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon of May 30, 2006. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of Cash, Certified Check, Cashier's Check, Manager's Check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit equivalent to One Percent (1%) of ABC or Bank Guarantee equivalent to One and a half Percent (1 1/2%) of ABC or Surety Bond equivalent to Two and a half Percent (2 1/2%) of ABC or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be on 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon of May 30, 2006 at the BAC Office, 2nd Floor, Right Wing, City Hall Building, General Santos City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

The Local Government Unit of General Santos City reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Armenian jet crashes off Russia; 113 killed

ADLER, RUSSIA—DIVERS SEARCHED STORM-CHURNED waters off Russia's Black Sea coast Wednesday, searching for the remains of 113 people who were killed when an Armenian passenger airliner crashed in rough weather as it was heading for a landing, emergency officials said.

It was the worst air disaster in Armenia's recent history.

Armenian airline officials said they believed the crash was due to the stormy weather, and Russian Emergency Situations Ministry spokesperson Viktor Beltssov said this was considered the likeliest cause. He said that the clouds were as low as 100 meters above the ground at the time of the crash.

Earlier, Russian officials said that the age of the aircraft and technical

factors could have been involved. Investigators did not believe terrorism was a factor.

The Airbus A-320, which belonged to the Armenian airline Armavia, disappeared from radar screens just under 6 km from the shore and crashed after making a turn and heading toward the Adler airport near the Russian resort of Sochi, Beltssov said. Rescue officials in the ministry's southern regional branch said the 105 passengers and eight crew members aboard

the plane flying from the Armenian capital Yerevan, including six children, were all killed.

In Sochi's airport, about 100 tearful relatives—nearly all Armenians—kept up an anguished vigil in a waiting hall. One man became hysterical and had to be taken away by ambulance.

Women, sobbing, held handkerchiefs to their mouths, while men sat silently, their heads in their hands.

Aram Sargsian, 22, said he had two uncles on the ill-fated plane who had been heading to Sochi for a week-long vacation. The city has a large ethnic Armenian population.

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Armenian President Robert Kocharyan declared Friday a day of mourning in both countries, the Kremlin said.

Wreckage from the plane was found not far from the shoreline, Beltssov said, and Sergei Kudinov, the head of the southern district office of the Emergency Situations Ministry, said the fuselage was found at a depth of 400 meters.

Search and rescue teams have pulled 33 bodies from the water, regional emergency officials said, none was wearing a life jacket, indicating they did not have sufficient warning to prepare for an emergency landing.

The airline said that 26 Russians, one Ukrainian and one Georgian were among the passengers. The rest were Armenian citizens.

Twenty-five boats as well as divers were involved in the search, and a deep-sea robot was to be used to try to recover the plane's black box, the Emergency Situations Ministry said.

RUSSIA CRASH

An Armenian aircraft carrying 113 people from Yerevan to the Russian resort of Sochi crashed into the Black Sea on Wednesday, officials said



REUTERS

2005 was deadliest year for journalists in a decade

PARIS—LAST YEAR WAS THE deadliest for journalists in a decade, with 63 reporters and five media aides killed, the French press freedom body Reporters sans Frontières (Reporters without Borders, RSF) said Tuesday.

Iraq accounted for 24 of the deaths.

An estimated 1,300 reporters were attacked or threatened, the organization said in its annual report, issued to mark the 16th International Press Freedom day on Wednesday.

Not since 1995, "when the Islamist Algerian groups were trying to attack everyone who did not back them," has the toll been so high, RSF said.

So far this year, 16 journalists and six media aides have been killed and 120 journalists and 56 cyber-dissidents are behind bars for having tried to do their job, RSF said.

It observed that almost a third of the world's population lives in countries where there is no press freedom.

In Africa, it said, "impunity is not an unfortunate hazard, it is the

rule," pointing to the unpunished murders of Norbert Zongo in 1998 in Burkina Faso and of Deyda Hydara in 2004 in Gambia.

"States also systematically repress the press without having to account to anyone at all," in, for example, Eritrea, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda.

Latin America is also a "high risk zone": seven journalists and a media aide died there last year.

Cuba remains the world's largest jailer of journalists, second only to China. Colombia is in the grip of a 40-year-old civil war

but Mexico overtook it last year as the most deadly country for the press on the continent.

In Peru and Haiti attacks and threats are commonplace. In the United States the principle of confidentiality of sources was "ill-treated" with the jailing of Judith Miller, a reporter with the New York Times.

Asia is ill "with authoritarianism," said RSF.

In Nepal, King Gyanendra symbolized "all the autocratic hatred that some heads of state entertain toward the freedom of the press" in North Korea, Burma and China.

At the same time the continent is also the land of democracy, with India filling the role of "Asian giant of press freedom."

Iraq was the most dangerous place to work, followed by the Philippines where seven journalists were killed.

Conditions also deteriorated in the states of the former Soviet Union, in particular in Azerbaijan, Belarus, Russia and Uzbekistan.

The European Union, in particular Belgium, France, Italy and Poland, saw "a high number of searches and summons of journalists, ordered to hand over to the police the names of their sources."

By contrast the new EU member states had made "spectacular" progress: the Baltic states, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Malta, Slovakia and Slovenia are "havens of peace," as are the countries of northern Europe, RSF said.

In North Africa and the Middle East "the freedom and safety of journalists are severely tested," RSF said.

With 27 deaths, 24 of them in Iraq, the Middle East was the most dangerous region for the press.

APP



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SPORTS

Editor: Teddyric S. Melendres
For sport name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)Early
duel for
UP-PAF,
Air21

GAMES TODAY (PUP Grounds)
Men: 7 a.m.—Pampanga vs RTU; 9:30 a.m.—Bulacan vs Cabuyao; 10 a.m.—Cebu City vs Army. Women: 11:30 a.m.—Laguna vs PUP; 1 p.m.—UP-Air Force vs Bacolod Jr. (Rizal Memorial Field)
Women: 7 a.m.—RTU vs Bacolod Jr.; 8:30 a.m.—Air21/Adamson vs UP-Air Force; 10 a.m.—Bacolod Sr. vs Manila; 11:30 a.m.—RTU vs PUP; 1 p.m.—Air21/Adamson vs Laguna

By Marc Anthony Reyes

UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES-Philippine Air Force and Air21-Adamson crushed separate rivals to stay unbeaten in three games in the women's division of the National Open softball championships yesterday at the Rizal Memorial football field.

UP-Air Force blanked the World Series-bound Manila Golden Girls, 3-0, while Air21-Adamson was even impressive in a 7-0 thrashing of 2002 champ Rizal Technological University.

The two part ways when they clash today at 8:30 a.m. in what could be a preview of the finals.

Both teams have superior lineups



POLYTECHNIC'S Hana Garcia (left) cowers as she tries to beat the throw to third base, manned by Bulacan's Nina Buenaventura. RONY HOMILLADA

over the rest and the match could provide a glimpse of what will happen in the championships," said chief organizer Boy Codinera of the Amateur Softball Association-Philippines.

Bacolod Senior, which is going to the Delaware World Series in August, started the day with an 11-0 rout of RTU for a 2-1 record.

Manila continued its buildup for the Kalamazoo Big League, also in August, by posting a 10-4 victory over Laguna to raise its slate to 2-1 even as Bacolod

Junior, also gearing up for the World Series in Washington, dumped Bulacan, 5-2, for its second straight win.

Over at the PUP grounds, Air Force unleashed its might on Bulacan, 19-0, to also remain unbeaten in the men's division with three victories.

In other men's action, Pampanga downed Cebu City, 3-1, while Polytechnic University blasted Davao, 9-1.

The top four teams after the single-round elimination move up to the Page System next round.

Torion stars as Realtors tame Tigers

By Musong R. Castillo

IF NOT FOR THE CALL TO RETURN to the Philippine Basketball Association, Jimwell Torion would still be in his native Cebu, strutting his stuff in a local semi-professional tournament there.

Now the wily 5-foot-8 guard is making the most out of a rejuvenated career.

Torion came off the bench in the second half last night and figured in a lot of key plays as Sta. Lucia downed Coca-Cola, 99-95, to snap the Realtors' three-game losing streak in the Gran Matador-Philippine Cup.

Plucked out of short retirement by the last team that took a chance on the talented but temperamental playmaker, Torion scored 11 points, hauled down four boards and stole three times to prop the Realtors to their third win in 11 games.

"We're down but not out of it," coach Alfrancis Chua said. "This win is a big boost for us."

Chua also made special mention of Mariou

Aquino, who has been battling injuries of late. The 6-foot-9 slotman scored 16 points in a reserve role and swatted away two shots to join an elite club with more than 900 blocks.

Aquino joined Philip Cesar, Benjie Paras, Abet Guidaban, Jerry Codinera and Ramon Fernandez as the only players ever to reach that plateau.

Coca-Cola, which took a third straight loss but stayed in third with a 6-5 card, had control until the end of the third period, 77-73.

But there was no stopping the Realtors once they took the lead at 81-79 courtesy of an Aquino layup made possible by a Torion outlet pass.

In the second game, Jeffrey Cariaso made the cushion free throws as Alaska defeated Talk N Text, 92-89.

The scores:
STA. LUCIA 99—Toloma 17, Aquino 16, Omol 12, Torion 11, Cabagnat 10, Espino 10, Mendoza 9, Gonzales 5, Calmrag 4, Santos 3, Call 2.
COCA-COLA 95—Antonio 22, Peek 18, Singcon 10, Beavia 9, Miranda 8, Marand 7, Wainwright 7, Abadientes 7, Arigo 7, Quarters: 28-29, 41-51, 73-77 99-95

La Salle
spikers still
unscathed,
trip Lyceum

MANILA SANTOS LED THE ATTACK WHILE Jacqueline Alarca shone in defense as La Salle drubbed Lyceum, 25-17, 25-21, 25-20, last night to keep its spotless record in the Shakey's V-League at the Blue Eagle Gym.

The 20-year-old Santos launched power-packed spikes to finish with 13 points even as Alarca notched four of her 12 points on blocks as the Lady Archers scored their third straight win to join Adamson in the lead.

La Salle needed just over an hour to slip past the Lady Pirates who groped for form all game long despite the the heroics of Ma. Concepcion Legaspi who accounted for 10 points.

Thai import Jindarat Kanchana also accounted for 12 points, including 11 winners for La Salle, while Michelle Datum chipped in eight points highlighted by two blocks.

Santos had 31 spike attempts as she assumed the role left by former chief spiker Michelle Carillo. And she found a perfect foil in 5-foot-9 Alarca, who has displayed a fighting heart rarely seen in 18-year-olds.

Far Eastern University defeated Ateneo, 25-8, 25-7, 25-19, 25-23, in the second game.

The Lady Tamaraws improved their record with their second win in three games. The Lady Eagles, on the other hand, dropped to 1-2.

Marc Anthony Reyes and Lawrence Kiorion

Rain or Shine, Toyota Otis eye solo 2nd

IT SEEMED LIKE RAIN OR SHINE COACH Leo Austria was just being modest.

"Any team can win this conference," said Austria before his defending champion Painters tackled the struggling Harbour Centre in the PBL Unity Cup last Sunday.

True enough, Harbour Centre scored an upset win, 59-56, over Austria's veteran squad.

Rain or Shine tries to bounce back from that stinging loss today when the Painters collide with the Toyota Otis Sparks for solo second spot at 4 p.m. at the Olivarez Sports Center in Paranaque.

"Every game is important for us and if we can beat Rain or Shine, that will be a good indication for our team," said Sparks coach Louie Alas.

Meanwhile, Harbour Centre tackles Hapee-PCU earlier at 2 p.m. minus leading scorer Joseph

STANDINGS	W	L
Montana	8	0
Toyota Otis	7	3
R. or Shine	7	3
G. Goose	5	5
Magnolia	4	6
Harbour	4	6
Hapee-PCU	3	7
TeleTech	2	7

(Olivarez Sports Center)
2 p.m.—Harbour Centre vs Hapee-PCU
4 p.m.—Toyota Otis vs Rain or Shine

Yeo, who will serve a one-game suspension for a wayward elbow thrown at Rain or Shine's Gilbert Malabanan.

The absence of Yeo, who averages 14.8 points per game, is expected to cripple Harbour Centre and coach Jorge Gallett could only hope that the Portmasters would respond the same way they did after Yeo's ejection late in the third quarter of their winning match versus Rain or Shine.

Second-stringer Choco Lanete stepped up big for the Portmasters down the stretch, burying a key three-pointer with only 40 seconds left.

"When Yeo was thrown out, it was a wake-up call for the players," said Gallett. "I hope we'll again play as a team."

Harbour Centre and Hapee-PCU, both loaded with collegiate stars, are trying to avoid elimina-

tion as the last two placers of the round.

In contrast, the top two squads will earn outright semifinal berths.

Rain or Shine and Toyota Otis, holding similar 7-3 cards, have been fighting for this semifinal incentive along with idle league-leader Montana Jewels.

The Elasto Painters, who edged the Sparks, 73-67, in the first round, will try to score a repeat before their intimidating frontline.

Marvin Ortigueno and Jay-R Reyes, who teamed up for 25 points in their last outing, have been leading Rain or Shine which has a clear height advantage over Toyota Otis.

With only four games left in the double round-robin phase, Hapee-PCU cannot afford to drop a fourth straight game.

Jasmine W. Payo

Nat'l beach volleyball under way

By Musong R. Castillo

failed to make it past the regionals.

Benilde is here representing Luzon along with Far Eastern, Adamson and St. Francis and all will be bracketed into different groups for the elimination round where they will join one team each coming from the Visayas and Mindanao.

The Adamson Lady Falcons, the champions here in 2002, Letran, St. Benilde and the University of Baguio are Luzon's representatives in women's play.

Foundation University, which won five years ago, University of San Carlos, University of Negros Occidental Recolets and 2002 and 2004 champ University of San Jose Recoletos qualified as the Visayas' representatives in the men's division.

Mindanao has its hopes pinned on Capitol University in Cagayan de Oro, Ateneo de Davao, University of Mindanao-Davao and Mindanao State in the

men's division, while University of Mindanao-Tugon, Holy Cross of Davao College, MSU and UMD carry the fight in the women's side.

This tournament has been a major part of Boracay's summer activities, the island practically standing still with heated action all day for the next three days.

After the groupings, action in the elimination round will be single round robin with the top four teams from each division advancing to the quarterfinals. Teams ranked fifth to 12th will then dispute the last four slots in the quarters ala Final Four where No. 1 tangles with No. 8, No. 2 vs. No. 7 and so on.

Elimination round games will be single set, race-to-25 before action shifts to best-of-three in the semis and the finals, where the deciding set will be race-to-15.



INTENSE action marked last year's tourney.

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Suns still shine in Phoenix

Ginobili, Duncan kick Spurs bid back to life

LOS ANGELES—BORIS DIAW HAD A PLAYOFF career-high 25 points, 10 rebounds and nine assists and Steve Nash added 22 points as Phoenix coasted to a 114-97 win over the Los Angeles Lakers in Game Five of their opening-round series.

All-Star Shawn Marion scored 21 points and Tim Thomas contributed 13 off the bench for Phoenix, which shot 48 percent (42-of-86) from the field and improved to 2-0 when it scores at least 100 points.

In San Antonio, Manu Ginobili and Tim Duncan could not wait to get back home and get back at the Sacramento Kings by posting a 109-98 win on Tuesday to take a 3-2 series lead.

Trailing the series, 3-2, the Suns will play Game Six in Los Angeles on Thursday and hope

to return to Phoenix for Game Seven Saturday.

Leading, 58-51, one minute into the third period, Phoenix pulled away as Marion and Raja Bell hit back-to-back triples during a 17-5 surge.

The Suns built a 22-point edge, but Lakers star Kobe Bryant, who scored 29 points, capped an 11-2 burst with a 3-pointer to make it 86-73 with 10:17 remaining in the fourth period.

Trailing by 14 points with 7 1/2 minutes left, the Lakers got a little life when Bell received his second technical foul and was ejected for clothes-lining Bryant to the floor.

"It excites me more than anything," Bryant said of Bell's hard foul.

Los Angeles pulled within 95-85 on basket by Lamar Odom, but the Suns regrouped and built their edge back to 20 points behind a 13-0 run,

which included back-to-back three-pointers by Leandro Barbosa and Marion.

In the other West matchup, Ginobili scored 27 points and Duncan added 24 for San Antonio.

After averaging just 88.5 points in losing two straight games at Sacramento, the Spurs shot 57 percent from the floor.

San Antonio can eliminate Sacramento in Game Six in Sacramento on Friday.

Ginobili scored eight points in Game Three and just three in Game Four. **AFP**

NBA on SOLAR SPORTS—Milwaukee vs Detroit (6 a.m. live, 8 p.m. replay)

THINGS get too hot between the Suns' Raja Bell (right) and the Lakers' Kobe Bryant. Both players were ejected in the match, Bell right after this flagrant foul. **AP**



Heat, Nets grab 3-2 series leads

MIAMI—DWYANE WADE RETURNED from a nasty fall in heroic fashion to spark the Miami Heat to a critical 92-78 victory over the Chicago Bulls in game five of their first-round playoff series.

Antoine Walker contributed 17 points and Shaquille O'Neal 16 for Miami, which rebounded from road losses in the last two contests to take a 3-2 lead in the best-of-seven series.

The Heat can advance to the conference semifinals with a victory in Chicago on Thursday.

"We needed this win tonight," said O'Neal, who added 10 rebounds and three blocks. "We want to try and close them out on Thursday."

In the other Eastern Conference game, Vince Carter scored 34 points and grabbed 15 rebounds as the New Jersey Nets posted a 92-86 win over Indiana in Game Five of their Eastern Conference first-round series.

Miami appeared to be in serious trouble as it trailed, 55-50, with less than six minutes remaining in the third quarter.

Wade was out of the game with a bruised hip that he sustained late in the second quarter and O'Neal was saddled

with four fouls.



CARTER: Another dominating performance.

"I got a shot and I knew the medicine would kick in," Wade said. "I saw we were down by five and Shaq was hit with his fourth foul, and I said to the trainer that I was OK."

"I saw the opportunity at the timeout

to get in there right away and try to contribute. He was working on me but I had to be out there."

Wade reentered the game with 5:50 left in the third period and promptly sparked the Heat on a 16-6 run over the next 10 minutes that totally changed the momentum of the game.

"Tonight we felt a little bit of pressure and once Dwyane went down, it was a shock," Heat coach Pat Riley said. "We all got stunned, but we were able to weather the storm not knowing what was going to happen to him. Strange things happen when you think things are at their worst."

In New Jersey, Richard Jefferson scored 24 points, Nenad Krstic added 19 and 11 rebounds and Jason Kidd dished out a postseason franchise-record 15 assists for New Jersey, which can advance to the conference semifinals with a win at Indiana in Thursday's Game Six.

After dropping two of the first three contests in this series, the Nets have bounced back with two straight victories largely due to Carter, who has poured in a total of 62 points in his last two outings.

AFP

For details visit www.swing.ph or contact your Federation Golf Club

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GOODYEAR SOLAS INQUIRER hip

Satellite Elimination

May 5, 2006 (VisMin) May 11, 2006 (Luzon North) May 12, 2006 (Luzon South) May 13, 2006 (Luzon East) May 14, 2006 (VisMin) May 15, 2006 (Luzon North) May 16, 2006 (Luzon South) May 17, 2006 (Luzon East) May 18, 2006 (VisMin) May 19, 2006 (Luzon North) May 20, 2006 (Luzon South) May 21, 2006 (Luzon East)

Grand Finals

May 26 - Orchard Golf & Country Club May 26 - Sta. Elena Golf Club & Country Club

(PDI April 27 & May 4, 2006)



INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

VICTORIAS MILLING COMPANY, INC., Victorias City, Negros Occidental wishes to invite interested bidders/contractors to pre-qualify and to bid for the supply of labor and consumable materials, tools, equipment, supervision and technical expertise, test and inspection and complete commissioning of the Factory Compressed Air Lines Renovation/Rehabilitation to Closed Loop System based on Scope of Work and Supply covered by J.R No. 29403A dated March 25, 2006 under CAPEX No. BRM 01-20-06 D THIS IS A TURNKEY PROJECT

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

1. Compressed Air Line Closed Loop System
2. Installation of new piping for compressed air system, installation of new ancillaries and components for air filters at every loop
3. Installation of series of filters and components at the point of use in conformity with ISO 8573.1 standard and Good Engineering Practice Guide 216

Interested bidders must submit the following pre-qualification requirements:

- Letter of intent with Interest to Bid
- VMC Accreditation papers for those who are not yet accredited
- Registered and in good standing with SEC or DTI
- Certificate of Registration with BIR
- Certificate of Membership with SSS, Philhealth, HDMF, Pag-ibig, etc.
- Certificate from Department of Labor and Employment
- Has a good track record and satisfactory performance as attested to by at least three (3) clients
- Latest audited Financial Statements stamped by BIR and certified by a Certified Public Accountant

Bidding kits are available at the MCD Office and at Makati Office on May 6 to May 11, 2006, after payment of a non-refundable fee of P500.00. Kindly submit the needed requirements or before May 18, 2006 to qualify to bid. The pre-bidding conference will be held on May 24, 2006, at the VMC HRD Training Center at 2:30 P.M. The commercial bidding will be announced thereafter.

For further inquiries, please contact Messrs. Carlos S. Quilatchon or Dan C. Labrador at VMC Millsite at telephone numbers (034) 399-3600 to 97 and (local) 2351 or 2309 and Mr. Ernesto "Toto" Olligo at VMC Makati Office at telephone numbers (02) 899-0485 and (02) 890-7061. Also visit our website www.victoriamilling.com and e-mail us at mcd@victoriamilling.com.

Victorias Milling Company, Inc., reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the Company. The Company assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidder/s for any expense/s or loss that they may incur in the preparation of the bids, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) TERESITA V. ILAGAN
Chairperson, Senior Bidding Committee

(PDI—May 4, 2006)



Republic of the Philippines
METROPOLITAN WATERWORKS AND SEWERAGE SYSTEM CORPORATE OFFICE

4th Floor Administration Building, MWSS Complex
Kalpunan Road, Balara, Quezon City 1106 Philippines
Tel. Nos. +63(2) 922-3757 922-2968 Fax No. +63(2) 921-2887

INVITATION TO BID

(Re-bidding)

The Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), will conduct a public bidding for the par kiloton sale and disposal of the following surplus materials and various unserviceable equipment and furniture, on an "as is-where is basis", located at the San Juan Stockyard, San Juan, Metro Manila and at the MWSS Property Management Storage, Balara, Quezon City. These materials are composed of the following:

Item No	Materials Description	Location	Approximate Quantity	MWSS Base Price
1	Surplus project materials composed of different kinds of pipes and fittings	San Juan Stockyard, San Juan, M.M.	2,000,000 kilos	P12.00/kilo
2	Heavy/Solid Metal	MWSS Complex, Balara, Q.C.	15,000 kilos	P10.83/kilo
3	Tin Sheet Scrap Metal (Yero)	MWSS Complex, Balara, Q.C.	2,000 kilos	P7.18/kilo
4	Scrap Kitchen Fixtures	MWSS Complex, Balara, Q.C.	500 kilos	P83.88/kilo
5	Aluminum Metal	MWSS Complex, Balara, Q.C.	500 kilos	P81.68/kilo
6	Scrap Brass (Tinlong Dilaw)	MWSS Complex, Balara, Q.C.	7,500 kilos	P104.86/kilo
7	Unserviceable Computers, Printers, Xerox Machines, Electronic Communication Equipment and Accessories	MWSS Complex, Balara, Q.C.	1,500 kilos	P8.00/kilo
8	Scrap/Waste Assorted Papers	MWSS Complex, Balara, Q.C.	5,000 kilos	P2.00/kilo
9	White Scrap Papers (obsolete continuous form, 6 ply 14" x 9 1/2")	MWSS Complex, Balara, Q.C.	1 lot	P88,931.08 (1 lot)
10.	Office Desks, Tables, Cabinets, and other Wooden Furnitures	MWSS Complex, Balara, Q.C.	1 lot	P15,000.00 (1 lot)
11	Thick Electrical Cables & PVC Insulation	MWSS Complex, Balara, Q.C.	386 kilos	P178.30/kilo

Interested parties may secure the Terms of Reference (TOR) and the Bid Form from the MWSS Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), located at the address below, upon payment of non-refundable amount of P1,000.00, starting May 02 until May 12, 2006.

Bids and Awards Committee (BAC)
Engineering & Project Management Department
Ground Floor, MWSS Complex
Kalpunan Road, Balara, Quezon City
Telefax 929-8688 / 922-2568

The bids must be submitted to the BAC in sealed envelope, one (1) original and two (2) duplicate copies, on or before 2:00 p.m. of May 24, 2006. The bundy clock located at the above address shall serve as the basis for the official time for this bidding. Bids received after the above deadline shall no longer be accepted. The bids will be opened by the BAC at 2:15 p.m. on the same date in the presence of the bidders, or their duly authorized representatives, and the general public.

A Pre-Bid Conference will be conducted at the above address, at 10:00 a.m. on May 17, 2006, and thereafter a joint site inspection will follow.

(Sgd.) ORLANDO C. HONDRADA
Administrator

THURSDAY, MAY 4, 2006

SPORTS

A23

Cebu hosts Ford Vis/Min Shootout Satellite tourney

LUIS AND ROBERTO COSQUELLA, RENE SILOS AND Alex Mirano combined for a net score of 58 to rule the Negros Occidental Golf Club eliminations for the Ford National Team Shootout recently.

Over at Iloilo Golf Club, the foursome of Frankie Locsin, Tony Rosado, Roger Rosales and William Gella emerged the top qualifier with a net score of 59.

The two champion foursomes and the four squads that finished behind them advance to the Visayas/Mindanao Satellite finals along with other qualifiers from

Pueblo de Oro Golf & Country Club, Alta Vista Golf Club, Fairways & Bluewater Golf and Country Club and Cebu Country Club.

The Visayas/Mindanao Satellite finals is scheduled tomorrow at the Cebu Country Club.

The other qualifiers from NOGC were June Bantug, Al Picardal, Ivnich Lopez and Anthony Ramos (net 59), Jimmy and Ramon Yusay, Luigi Benedicto, and Joe Mari Limjap (60), Leo and Vicente Gustilo Jr., Roberto Soliven and Daniel Gonzaga (60), Epifanio Torre, Ramon Bene-

dicho, Juan Carlos Torre and JR Tanpico (61).

Completing the Iloilo qualifying cast were Butch Jamarlan, Josef Narango, Edwin Delicana and Teitus Ha (net 59), Dodo Cua, Pee-wee Aguirre, Ramil Cortez and Ian Rosales (60), Tim Parker, Pepe Isada, Maggie and Mark Rivera (61), Ed Yee, Steve Jardeleza, Johnny Young and Edmund Larroza (61).

The top three teams from the Satellite Finals will compete in the Grand Finals on May 25 and 26 at Orchard Golf and Country Club and Sta. Elena Golf and Country Club

along with their counterparts from Iloilo.

The winning foursome will be entitled to an all-expenses paid golf vacation to Spring City Resort in Kunming, China.

The Ford National Team Shootout is presented by Ford Group Philippines, Swing Magazine, and the Federation of Golf Club Phils., Inc. (FedGolf)—the country's largest organization of private golf clubs. For more details, call the FedGolf office at (02) 840-3951 or visit www.swing.ph.

Longshot VGC pro Vanial tops RP Open qualifying

CLUB PRO VIC VANIAL SHOT A SECOND STRAIGHT 3-OVER-PAR 75 yesterday to top the Philippine Open qualifier even as four amateurs made the grade at the close of the 36-hole tournament at Vilamor Golf Club.

Vanial, in fourth spot at the start of the round, dropped three strokes on the first five holes but played steadily from there to salvage a 39-36 card.

With a 150 aggregate, Vanial towed nine others into the Philippine Open slated May 25-28 at Wack Wack where 27 other Filipino pros plus four members of the national pool and two sponsors' invitees of

the National Golf Association of the Philippines have been seeded.

Veteran Ernie Rellon carded a 76 to place second at 151 while Edwin Estrella shot a 75 and finished in joint third at 152 with Jun Cedo, who fumbled with a 78.

Other 152 scorers were amateurs Jun Bernus, the former national amateur and DHL Amateur Open champion

and Gary Sales, who had a 76 and 78, respectively.

Another amateur, Anthony Fernando, who with Sales upstaged the pros in the first round with 73s, limped home with an 80 but still gained an RP Open with a 153, a stroke better than the cutoff score of 154s.

Meanwhile, the NGAP announced that the RP Open entry fee for all non-Asian Tour members is pegged at \$70 or P3,650. For registration, contact NGAP at 525-6987 or 524-5160, email ngapgof@hotmail.com.

SPORTSWATCH

Delada gets crack at WBC int'l title

PHILIPPINE NO. 2 LIGHTWEIGHT DEXTER DELADA WILL SEEK THE VACANT WBC International lightweight title on May 27 against Ali Funeka in East London, South Africa. Delada's manager Rex "Wake" Salud said the fighter clinched the title crack due to his good fight record of 14-2 with 10 KOs. Delada had vied for the Philippine lightweight title, but was stopped by champ Fernando Montilla last November in the fourth round. Funeka, a right-handed banger ranked WBC No. 20, is a strong puncher with only one loss in 27-fights. *Salen Lagumbay, Contributor*

RP junior Cuppers nip HK

KUCHING, MALAYSIA—PABLO OLIVAREZ AND JOHN FRANCIS LAGO COMBINED for a doubles victory as the sixth seeded Philippines bested Hong Kong, 2-1, Wednesday at the start of the BNP Paribas Junior Davis Cup Asia-Oceania qualifying tournament at the Sarawak Lawn Tennis Association courts. Olivarez made up for his 3-6, 3-6 defeat in the second singles by scoring on well-placed shots while Lago, playing in his first international tournament, worked behind a solid forehand as they whipped the tandem of Ryan Cheung and Darren Ng, 6-0, 6-4. Joshua Hansel Ho, a veteran of the 2005 World Juniors Championships, gave the Philippines a 1-0 lead with a 6-7 (3), 7-5, 6-4 victory over the US-born Cheung in the first singles.

Princesa, Pison rule duckpin tilt

TWO-TIME PSA AWARDEE REMY PRINCESA OF D'FRIENDLY BOWLERS PALLED to cop the women's Master crown in the 31st Grand and 13th National Youth duckpin bowling championships held at the Marketplace in Mandaluyong City. Princesa, Philippine Duckpin Bowling Council auditor and Bureau of Customs assessment division employee, rallied in the final three games of the new 8-game Masters format to score 927 pins. Ben Pison of Bacolod City did his boss and teammate Jaime Chua of Feast Truck proud by nailing the men's Masters competition with 1030 pins.

Makati Salpuhan resumes today

THE HUNT FOR THE EYE-POPPING PRIZE OF P4.4 MILLION CONTINUES IN Makati Coliseum's Summer Salpuhan 8-cock derby which enters its fourth round today. Some 75 fights are on tap beginning at 5 p.m. Promoters Lito Orillaza, Rudy Salud and William Co of WTV Sports and Amusement Corp. announced that the last day to join this derby is on Saturday. Entries must be submitted tomorrow, from 2-9 p.m. Entry fee is P11,000. Three more provincial cockers posted perfect scores of three points last Tuesday: Sam Mendoza of Rizal (Sam High Fashion), Francis Rodriguez of Bulacan (San Rafael LNF Farms) and Alex Calderon (ME Tama Ka).

27 entries lead Roligon Tukaan

ANOTHER HUGE CROWD IS EXPECTED AT THE 15,000-SEAT AND NEWLY RENOVATED Roligon Mega Cockpit today as the Tukaan 5-cock derby sizzles at 5 p.m. with the third day of eliminations. Twelve more participants tallied two wins each Tuesday night, bringing to 27 the number of qualifiers with perfect scores. With two wins each are Oglia Patino (Urban), Cesar Marquez (Kalipunan), Engr. Parungao (Cabiao NE), Bebot Zaldy (Hataw Sige Hataw), Louie Du (M38 Cesa), Leo Allangan (Baguio Beans), Erwin Diamante (Tunitungin LB), E. Javier (JDS), Raul Ebeo (Rob Marining), Jerry Palmares (Blue Triangle), Tony Sy (Sly Ray) and Rey Soriano (RCS Mat and Tim).

Villarino shines in archery

A 6-YEAR-OLD INCOMING CLARET SCHOOL PREP STUDENT-FRANZ MICHAEL Villarino—stole the show in the recent archery age group level tournament by winning the gold medal with a score of 108 points at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum. Villarino, who began training only two months ago, beat R-Vee Zotomayor by four points and Gabby Moreno by six in the youngest bracket of the event organized by the National Archery Association of the Philippines. A total of 58 age-groupers saw action, according to NAAP president Dr. Lenora Fe S. Brawner. Janet Bermas of Makiling and Juan Pablo Zaragoza of TAC-AC ruled the high school-college level. Bermas tallied 108 to top Bongabon's Marilyn Osias (94) and TAC-AC's Marie Cabral (93).



GOLD medalist Franz Michael Villarino (center) displays his form, together with Gabby Moreno (left) and R-Vee Zotomayor.

Momentum vs memento

THE LAKERS BLEW THEIR FIRST CHANCE TO eliminate the Suns yesterday.

No, I'm sorry.

It was the other way around.

The Suns, speeding again with their MVP at the wheels, Steve "Speed" Nash, blew the Lakers out of the US Airways Center in Phoenix by atoning for the one morta, sin they committed in the last three games—score below 100.

No, the victory did not oust the Lakers. The Suns need two more of that to advance; the Lakers need one. Just one. If you ask Jack Nicholson, that could come within the next 96 hours, or even earlier.

Phoenix scored below 100 in losing its last three games, one in Phoenix and two in Los Angeles. But yesterday, the Suns were surely back on the horizon in the NBA playoffs' first round.

As if in deep slumber, the stunned Suns woke up, rediscovered themselves and regained their scoring tide to bomb the Lakers with a 114-97 victory and narrowed the Lakers' lead to 3-2.

The game wasn't only extremely physical, it also sent shivers down the spine of coach Phil Jackson, who wanted his Lakers to play desperate but did not.

"That's what happens when teams play with some desperation," said Jackson. "They (the Suns) were active and aggressive and beat us with the nature of their play."

The Suns, natural runners and gunners, drew double figures from six men. Boris Diaw led scoring with 25, Nash had 22 and Shawn Marion 21.

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

Suddenly, the Suns reinvented their Game 1 victory when they scored 107 against the Lakers' 102.

The referees threw out the Suns' shot artist Raja Bell on a headlock foul that floored Kobe Bryant with 7:33 left in the fourth.

But rather than fold, the Suns erupted with an 8-0 blast to pad their lead to 18 down the stretch, making Game 6 on Friday (Thursday in L.A.) a battle between a team with unassailable momentum and a team with a bad memento.

Definitely, the Suns, with new-found strength and a new lease on life, will be more than inspired gunning for the equalizer tomorrow against the Lakers, who will be bounded by a sexual assault charge leveled on Kwame Brown last weekend.

The game wasn't only physical, it was also "verbal."

With 3:11 to play, Bryant, saddled with one technical in an earlier skirmish with Bell, also got himself ejected after arguing a referee's call in a play that did not involve him but Brown, the lumbering giant with corn cobs for a hairdo.

The sexual assault case police are investigating in Los Angeles has somewhat gotten into the

nerve of Jackson.

"We will not talk about it," Jackson said of the case before yesterday's game. "As a basketball team, we're going to focus on what we need to do. I did say something to Kwame. We have three priorities: Basketball, basketball, and family."

The Brown case showed its ill effects yesterday.

Brown played only 24 minutes, 10 below his series average, and was foul-plagued, getting 3 fouls 11 minutes into the first quarter. Although he made all 6 of his shots, he played mostly tentative and had only 3 rebounds.

Leeks incessantly hit the Los Angeles game, the Lakers always caught napping when Nash made incursions. Smush Parker was 1-of-7 for five points, completely a far cry from his heroics in Game 4 where his defense produced game-winning steals for the Lakers.

They seemed not ready to play yesterday.

Lakers' turnovers: 18.

"We need to calm down," said Luke Walton, whose jump ball with Nash with 6.1 seconds left in Game 4's overtime fueled Bryant's 17-foot game-winner at the buzzer.

Calm down they must. One win in two games isn't a tall order.

It is still Phoenix that's on the edge. To complete its rise from the ashes of its 3-1 ruins, it needs to sweep the last two games.

That, I must say, is a peak called Mt. Everest.

Comments to menju@pldids.net

Macaya, Tojino take top honors in Riviera Inv'tl; 2 score aces

BIBLY MACAYA AND LARRY TOJINO BUCKED THE tough playing conditions with 119 points to bag the overall crown in the eighth Riviera Golf Club invitation, al member-guest tournament recently in Silang, Cavite.

The low-handicappers from the Class A division came to fore as Manuel Valdez and his guest partner Stewart Go settled for the division title after losing to Macaya and Tojino by just a point for the top award.

Raymund Singsi picked up another low gross award

this time teaming up with Venjo Reyes for 98 points.

Romy Ignacio and Junie Fontanilla emerged the Class B champions and the pair of Alfredo Hilario-Montalvo Mata bagged the Class C plum.

Two aces were recorded, the first on Day 1 on his very first hole—the 17th of Couples—by Romy Fabregas, and the second on Day 4—the 17th of Langer—by Remeiro Esmaquel. They shared a Ford Focus put up by Ford Alabang and each won a trip to the US via Asiana Airlines

Bonifacio Plimentel didn't need a lucky shot to win the other Ford Focus. His name was picked as the winner of the car in the grand raffle that capped the four-day competitions which had Smart Communications as presenter. Mizuno, Paggior, PacSports, Teriyaki Boy, Coca Cola and Citimotors were the other sponsors.

Ignacio and Fontanilla scored 115 to win by two over Stephen Tan-Fred Garcia with Florian Concepcion-Quino Batema placing third at 109.

The results:

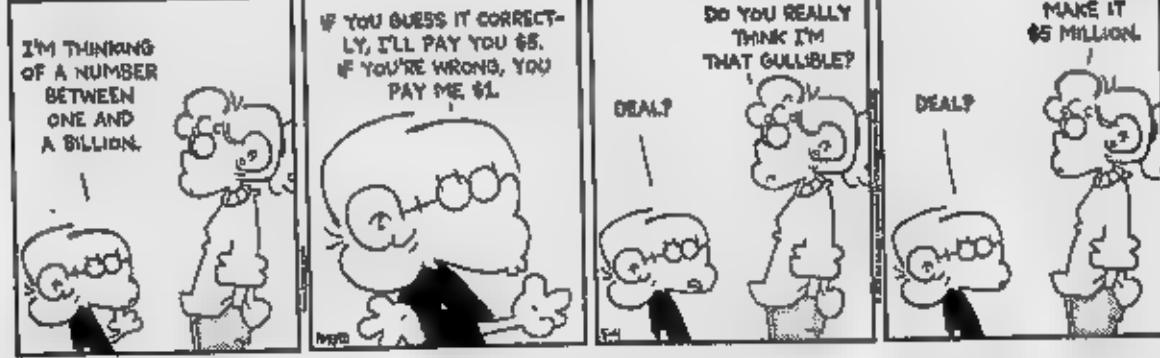
Overall champion—119 Bibly Macaya-Larry Tojino; Low Gross: 98 Raymund Singsi-Venjo Reyes

Class A—119 Manuel Valdez-Stewart Go, 113 Hroyuld Utsumi-Konishi Tomiharu, 112 Ding Kalina-Reynaldo Aquilera

Class B—16 Romy Ignacio-Junie Fontanilla, 113 Stephen Tan-Fred Garcia, 103 Florian Concepcion-Quino Batema

Class C—116 Alfredo Hilario-Montalvo Mata, 114 Pedro Garcia-Jimmy Bonomeo, 113 Remyo Garcia-Boy Favis

FOXTROT

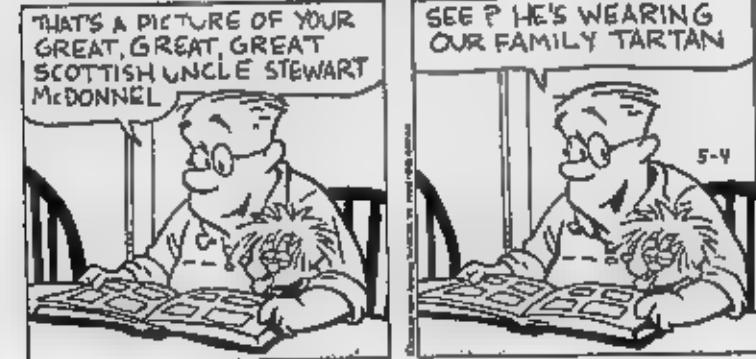


BY BILL AMEND

A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA

MARVIN



BY TOM ARMSTRONG

PUGAD BABOY



BY PM. JUNIOR

BABY BLUES



BY JERRY SCOTT

MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL

ATOMO AND WEBOY



BY LYRA GARCIELANO

DIVINE COMEDY



BY STEVEN PABALINAS

MIKROKOSMOS



BY JOMIKE TEJIDO

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're a wonderful combination of practicality, sensitivity and warm charm. You're hardworking and ambitious. Others see you as conscientious and reliable. You're quick to understand who others are. Marriage, partnership and a settled home are important. At the age of 17, you become far more curious about life. This year could be one of the best years of your life ever had!

Birthdate of: Audrey Hepburn, actress; Ana Gasteyer, actress; Randy Travis, singer

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): In plain and simple terms, this can be a very lucky day for you. People will give you gifts, favors, inheritances, money or help you in some way. Bonus!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): This is a great day at work for you. It's a marvelous day to start a new job. Co-workers are helpful and supportive. Pleasant surprises await you. Good news about your health might please you.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Enjoy entertaining at home today. All real estate deals can be very profitable today. Buy something for home and family.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You might meet somebody wonderful today. New relationships that begin now will be joyful and exciting. They will be friendships that expand your world. Yay!

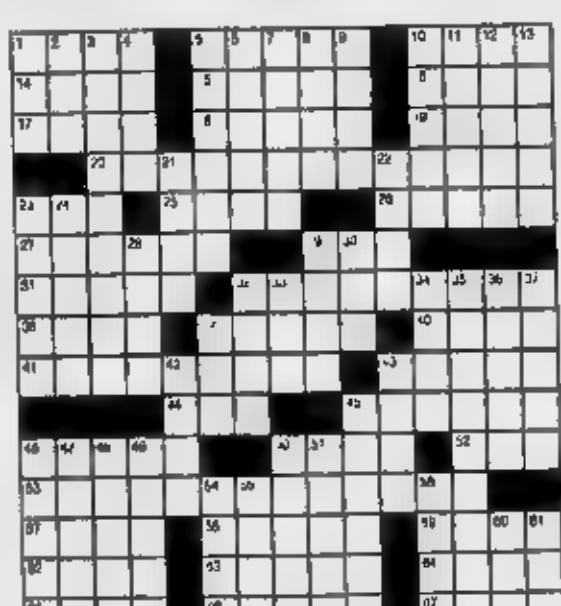
CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Exciting flirtations and new romance could knock you off your feet (eyes across a crowded room and all that). This is a wonderful day for parties and creative activities. Enjoy!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You're full of optimistic enthusiasm. Life is good. Expect to meet new people who surprise you in some way. On the whole, this is the day full of pleasant surprises.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Pound to pulp
- 3 Felony
- 10 Length, times
- 14 Sacramento's arena
- 15 Adam's country
- 16 Tear to pieces
- 17 Canyon comeback
- 18 Product name
- 19 Church section
- 20 Start of Evan Esar quip
- 23 Is able to
- 25 Sea eagles
- 26 Map dot
- 27 Doing sums
- 29 Poetic contraction
- 31 Farm outbuildings
- 32 Part 2 of quip
- 38 New driver, usually
- 39 Cloud nine
- 40 Norway's patron saint
- 41 Part 3 of quip
- 43 Nigerian currency unit
- 44 Hole maker
- 45 Rang a big bell?
- 46 Closet material
- 50 Look over
- 52 Opp of SSW
- 53 End of quip
- 57 Spots
- 68 Taken (surprised)
- 69 Finest
- 72 Aware of
- 63 Cranny
- 64 Enthralled with
- 65 Mt. Holyoke's founder
- 66 Intrigued
- 67 Bedazzled
- 68 DOWN
- 1 Actress West
- 2 Circle part
- 3 Subject of a Spielberg film
- 4 Flicka's foot
- 5 Bionic Woman, e.g.
- 6 Second showing



By Alan P. Olschwang

Huntington Beach, CA



Wednesday's Puzzle Soln
SPEED HASP POMP
RETRO ESEA ADAM
SLANG FIL RSE
FLIGHTS OF FANCY
EEE NERD
DAN RAIDER
UP EVER SELA
CASTLES THEATER
THREE SPIRO TSE
STILTS FEET HER
ERLE AP
LOFTY AMB TIONS
OPAL LOUD TRAPS
PALK OTTO ARTIE
ELAN METS LEONE
SCALES METS LEONE

7 Mosque prayer leaders
8 Bill of lara
9 Breaks off
10 Sauces and creams
11 Drive back
12 Follow logically
13 Skillful
21 Cravings
22 Wee
23 Throws
24 Farrowed in
25 Rover
28 Across Skye
29 Scottish Gaelic
30 '84 and '97 U.S. Open winner
32 Hebrew month
33 Missing from a vacuum
34 Mountain sound
35 Proper relative position
38 Actress Black
37 Keep clear of
38 Show
40 Bloom
41 Mountain sound
42 Unit of length

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ENTERTAINMENT

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Meet the other 'Big Brother'

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

WHEN THE TFFN Edition of ABS-CBN's "Pinoy Big Brother" series was first announced, parents and other media critics were quick to express concern.

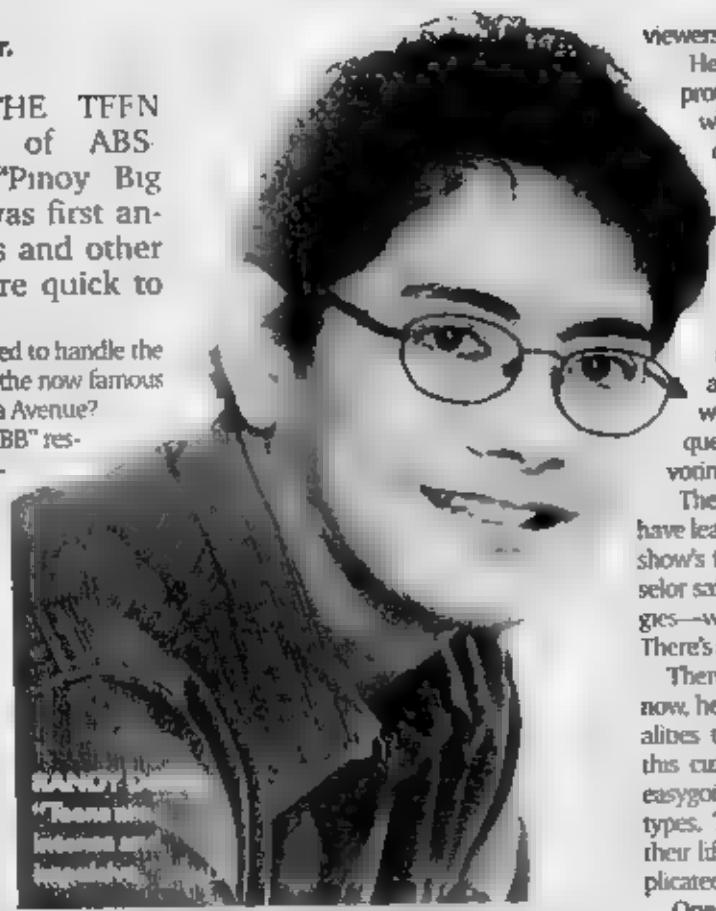
Are teenagers equipped to handle the pressures of isolation in the now famous house on Mother Ignacia Avenue?

Dr. Randy Dellosa, "PBB" resident psychologist, tackled this, and more, with Inquirer Entertainment.

"Teens are intense and impulsive. They may not always know how to control this. They may also go overboard in testing the limits. A possible outcome are love affairs that may not end well," Dellosa said.

Another vital issue is sexuality, he pointed out. "Teenagers with raging hormones may find a need to release this."

But he is not that worried about the housemates, Dellosa said. "I'm more



concerned about the teen viewers. They look up to the housemates as role models. What if the housemates commit mistakes? We can't really prevent exploratory behavior, but [since it's on TV], teen

viewers might think it's acceptable." He said the housemates are well-protected. "Big Brother and the whole staff are watching. I am on call 24-7."

After his first "counseling session" with them just hours before this interview, he offered this observation: "Individually and as a group, they are keen on exploring, but they are also very cautious. They are aware that negative behavior would merit some form of consequence from Big Brother and the voting public."

The teen housemates seemed to have learned from the experiences of the show's two previous editions, the counselor said. "Some have picked up strategies—what to do and what not to do. There's a greater fear of [censure]."

There's "balance" in the house right now, he said: "Big Brother picks personalities that are solid and unique. With this current batch, the boys are more easygoing and relaxed—boy-next-door types. The girls are more conflicted in their life stories, more emotionally complicated."

One, Jamilla Obispo is an unwed mother who once worked as a model and GRO in a bar.

"Nina Jose has a history of anorexia nervosa," Dellosa added. "That's a body

MEET/A2-2

Resident counselor discusses the perks, perils of teen life in 'PBB' house

WHAT'S ON AT ROBINSONS

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discover

First 'Idol' auditions set June 3

By Marinel R. Cruz

"PHILIPPINE IDOL" HOPEFULS HAD BETTER be ready with audition pieces on June 3.

This is according to ABC 5, which announced on Tuesday that the first of three Manila auditions is set on June 3. The network has acquired the franchise for the phenomenally popular reality talent search from FremantleMedia.

The venue will be announced later.

Tryouts for the Visayas and Mindanao regions will be in Cebu and Davao, respectively, said Terra Daffon, ABC 5 senior vice president for corporate affairs.

Checklist

Fast-track auditions will be held at satellite offices in SM Malls in key cities.

According to a checklist that ABC 5 sent to INQUIRER Entertainment, contestants should be at least 16 but not more than 28 years old on the day of the audition.

He or she must be a Filipino citizen or a bearer of dual citizenship, one of which is Filipino.

In case a contestant has dual citizenship,

FIRST/A2-2



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Clarissa King, Model

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starmall		Mandaluyong	
1	HANNY MC PHEE	1	1
2	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	2	2
3	SILENT HILL	3	3
4	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	4	4
5	CHINESE TALL STORY		
metropolis star		Metropolis	
1	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	1	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
2	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	2	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
3	SILENT HILL	3	SILENT HILL
4	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	4	SILENT HILL
5	CHINESE TALL STORY		
THEATRES		The Hills Have Eyes	
1	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	1	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
2	BASIC INSTINCT 2	2	EIGHT BELOW
3	SILENT HILL	3	THE HILLS HAVE EYES
4	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	4	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
5	SILENT HILL		
PACIFIC MALL		Jade Cinema	
1	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	1	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
2	BASIC INSTINCT 2	2	THE HILLS HAVE EYES
3	SILENT HILL	3	BASIC INSTINCT 2
4	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	4	JUST FRIEND
5	SILENT HILL		
CINEMAGIC		Centre Plaza Cinema	
1	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	1	V FOR VENDETTA
2	THE HILLS HAVE EYES	2	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
3	RESERVED	3	BASIC INSTINCT 2
4	RESERVED	4	THE WILD
5	RESERVED		
Centre Plaza Cinema		Berna Cinema	
1	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	1	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
2	THE HILLS HAVE EYES	2	BASIC INSTINCT 2
3	RESERVED	3	THE WILD
4	RESERVED	4	TRISTAN & SOLDE
5	RESERVED		

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GALLERIA

1 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3 • THX	6 WHEN A STRANGER CALLS
2 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	7 SILENT HILL
3 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	8 SLITHER
4 THE WILD	9 THE SENTINEL
5 AQUAMARINE	10 PAMAHIN

ERMITA

1 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	5 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
2 SLITHER	6 THE WILD WHEN A STRANGER CALLS
3 THE SENTINEL	7 AQUAMARINE
4 SILENT HILL	

METRO EAST

1 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	5 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
2 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	6 THE WILD
3 SLITHER	7 THE SENTINEL
4 WHEN A STRANGER CALLS	8 SILENT HILL

NOVALICHES

1 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	4 THE SENTINEL
2 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	5 SILENT HILL
3 SLITHER	6 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3

CITISQUARE MALABON

1 PAMAHIN	1 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
2 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	2 AQUAMARINE
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4 RESERVE	4 THE WILD

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STAR ROSA

1 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	1 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
2 BASIC INSTINCT 2	2 BASIC INSTINCT 2
3 NANNY MCPHEE	3 THE WILD
4 THE SENTINEL	4 TRISTAN AND ISOLDE

DASMARINAS

1 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	1 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
2 AMERICAN SOLDIERS	2 BASIC INSTINCT 2
3 SLITHER	3 SLITHER
4 SHE'S THE MAN	4 THE HILLS HAVE EYES

IMUS

1 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	1 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
2 AMERICAN SOLDIERS	2 SLITHER
3 SILENT HILL	3 GRANDMA'S BOY
4 SLITHER	4 NORTH COUNTRY

BACOLOD

1 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	1 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
2 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	2 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
3 THE WILD	3 THE WILD
4 FINAL DESTINATION 3	4 TIGER BLADE
5 JUST FRIENDS	5 SILENT HILL
6 BASIC INSTINCT 2	6 GRANDMA'S BOY

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ENTERTAINMENT

A2-1

Hot and happening at 42 (a naughty chat with Zsa Zsa Padilla)

From page A2-4

matic love story. It's really one for the books!

Tita Nena was one of my mom's closest friends. She even told my mom once that she wants me to write her biography. I kidneyed her and said, "Ok as long as you pay me per word."

In many ways, Tita Nena reminds me of my mom. Both of them seem intimidating but they soften up when hit in the right spot. Mothers don't want just to be heard but to be really listened to. Now that my

mom's gone, I miss her sermons in a way I never thought I would. Maybe when the mom in Tita Nena and Liezl prevail, they will understand each other a little more.

I texted Albert for his reaction to Tita Nena's explosive statements. His textback

"We decided to just let it pass. No need to clear our name. It's been going on since time immemorial. We don't want to talk about it anymore not only for us but more for our kids. It doesn't matter what people think. What matters is God knows the

truth."

Family is family. Tita Nena, Liezl and Albert should just keep on loving so that it will stop hurting. And before they know it, understanding will come somewhere along the way.

Ate Vi's advice

From page A2-4

died about two years ago. "I met April before she died," said Vilma. "I would attend activities at the special school in Lupa that she attended."

Vilma was not in the country when April died. "I learned only when Daisy delivered a speech about starting a foundation named after April. She talked about her loss [but] I saw only her strength."

The last lines of Daisy's speech were: "When parents die, the children are called orphans. What do people call a mother who has lost her child?" These lines are in the two-part episode of "MMK," directed by Olive Lamasan.

"With material like this, I still get excited [as an actress]," said Vilma. "It's in the blood—even if I am already a public servant (three-term mayor of Lupa City)."

She has no intention of furthering her political career—yet. "I've been asked to run for governor or congressman," she said. "But I have no immediate plans. My being a mayor was destiny. My being an actress was also destiny. I know there's something else I'm also destined to be."



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G4	1 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	2 AQUAMARINE	3 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
GB1	4 SENTINEL	5 THE WILD	6 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
GB3	7 SILENT HILL	8 AQUAMARINE	9 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
ATC	10 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	11 SILENT HILL	12 AQUAMARINE
ACC	13 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	14 SILENT HILL	15 AQUAMARINE
M2	16 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	17 AQUAMARINE	18 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3

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Greenbelt - 752 4853; from 11am to 12mn
Market! Market! - 866 7519

GLORIETTA

The Philippine Star's Kids Only Triple Treat
May 5, 2006

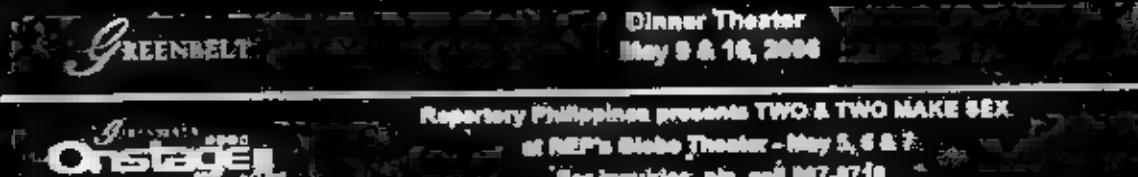
JAMMIN' with DISNEY
May 4 to 7, 2006

AYALA CENTER CEBU

Cebu Business Month's Opening Salvo
May 5, 2006

MARKE! MARKET!

Campus Quest 2006 (Pre-Pageant)
May 8, 2006



Dinner Theater

May 8 & 16, 2006

Repertory Philippines presents TWO & TWO MAKE SIX
at REP's Studio Theater - May 5, 6 & 7.
For inquiries, pls. call 887-8710

Registration is now ongoing for Ayala Museum's

Summer Art Festival Workshop 2006

For inquiries, please call 757-7117 to 21 loc 30 or visit www.ayalamuseum.org

Come & join

Jumpin' Jam

A Live Musical Meet and Greet show with Mickey, Minnie, Donald, Goofy, Chip and Dale

April 27, 28, 29, & 30, 2006

11 am, 1 pm, 3 pm, 5 pm

Activity Center

Customer Service Hotline: 752-7272

May 4, 5, 6, & 7, 2006

12 pm, 2 pm, 3:30 pm, 6 pm

May 6 & 7:

1 pm, 1:30 pm, 3:30 pm, 5 pm, 6:30 pm

Activity Center

Customer Service Hotline: 842-2782-772-1850

May 11, 12, 13, & 14, 2006

12 pm, 2:30 pm, 4:30 pm, 6:30 pm

Activity Center

Customer Service Hotline: 866-7519

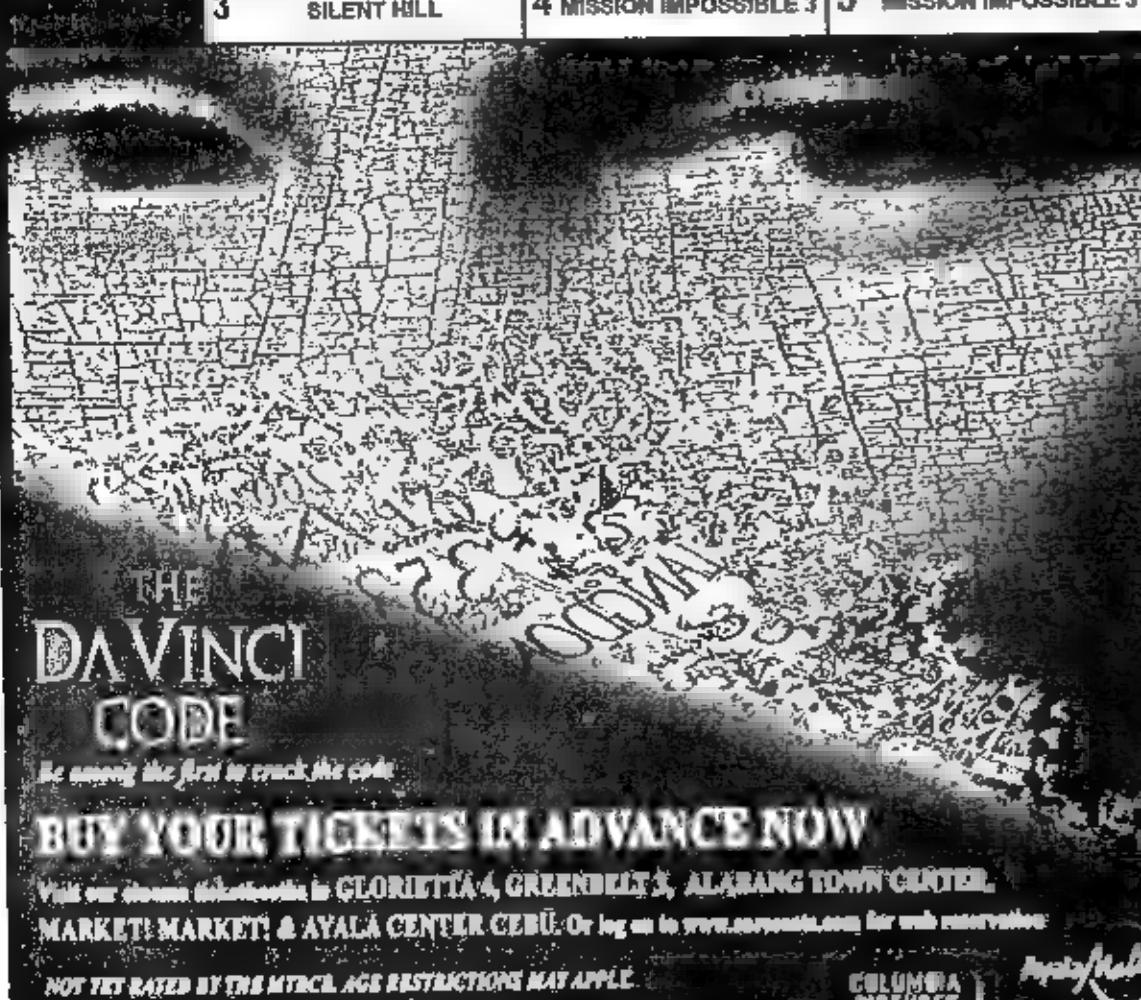
May 18, 19, 20, & 21, 2006

1 pm, 3 pm, 5 pm, 7 pm

Activity Center

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Explore the world of your favorite Disney Characters, Princess Castle, Playhouse Disney, Disney/Pixar's CARS Racetrack, Fairies Enchanted Forest, W.I.T.C.H. The Krandaka Maze from April 27 to May 31



ENTERTAINMENT

THURSDAY, MAY 4, 2006

Hot and happening at 42



ZSA ZSA wears a binder when sleeping.

ZSA ZSA PADILLA (WHO TURNS 42 THIS month) joins the Hollywood trend of being hot and happening, as 40 indeed becomes the new 30. Doesn't she kinda remind you of Uma Thurman?

For Zsa Zsa, it all boils down to healthy eating habits, regular exercise and of course Dr. Vicki Belo's "Midas touch." Thanks to mesotherapy to eliminate stubborn fat she could not exercise away, and Fraxel and Thermage to tighten her abdominal skin and improve stretch marks, Zsa Zsa flaunts a physique unmarred by age.

Just like her, I will be 42 soon. But why look my age if I refuse to even act my age (hehehe)? Con mucho Belo, I somehow maintain my "market value." Dr Vicki has truly given a whole new meaning to the saying "Life begins at 40" and how! Without feeling 40, Zsa and I enjoyed some girl talk.

Has your youthful body enhanced intimate moments with Tito Dolphy?

Yes would be an understatement! I sleep with a binder on but no undies. He knows the cue (giggles). I have also become more comfy with myself. I hope women who are pushing 40 out there will snap out of the mindset na peg 40 ka na it's mid-life crisis time.

What was his reaction to your sizing billboard on EDSA?

He's used to me changing my look every so often. Walang bawal. He's so cool. Once I came home with a different hair color, he just said "Akala ko may foreigners trying guest!"

Don't you think you're sexier than your daughter Karylle?

Karylle has her own charm. All women go through certain phases in their lives before they can exude a certain mystique. Wait till Karylle reaches her prime!

What's the secret of your staying power?

Not all singers are given a chance to act. I'm lucky I was able to cross over. I was sort of prepared for acting. But I will always go back to singing.

Will your new body fit into a bridal gown?

Abangan!

Sad for Liez!

I am sad that Tita Nena (Amalia Fuentes) is on the warpath again versus Albert and Liezel Martinez. She says that the couple should stop making it appear that she gave them a hard time when they were starting in the US.

I was a bridesmaid at the Martinez' wedding and among to their eldest, Alyanna. From Day 1 when they eloped, I was privy to their melodrama.

HOT/A2-3



VILMA Santos: "Pay your taxes, kids. Learn from my experience."

Ate Vi's advice

By Nini Valera

even if her marriage to Edu Manzano suffered from it.

"Edu wanted me to be Mrs. Manzano, to lie low from show biz. But I had to work and pay my debts. I survived and recovered. Not everybody is as lucky."

Surprised

Vilma was surprised to learn that Luis, her son by Edu, paid a bigger income tax than she did this year.

"For the first time in my life, I felt insecure," Vilma said, laughing. "Luis was earning more—I told myself, this couldn't happen. But it's happening."

She described Luis as a good person who wants to enjoy life. "(And) the girls! I know my son, he's definitely no longer a virgin. But I still don't want him to get married and make me a grandmother," Vilma admitted. "He just turned 25!"

Direk Vi?

The actress, who's making a TV comeback tonight on a special two-part episode of "Maalaala Mo Kaya" now celebrating its 15th anniversary—observed that today's young stars are all talented.

"And beautiful," she gushed. "They can dance, sing, they can do anything. But the problem there is, it's hard to stand out. During my time, it was a one-on-one with Nora (Aunor) and me."

What more does she want to achieve?

"I'd like to direct, like Laurice Guillen or Marilou Diaz-Abaya," she declared. "Other than this, she's content."

For her "MMK" stint, Vilma said she found the perfect story. "They have been asking me to do an episode for the longest time, but we couldn't agree on the script. I found this story of Daisy Hernandez touching."

Tonight's story revolves around Daisy's relationship with her special child April, who

ATEVI'S/A2-3

ARANETA CENTER

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Gateday Cineplex*10

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THE WILD	WHEN A STRANGER CALLS	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 3
1:00/2:00/5:00/7:00/9:00	7:40/9:50	11:50/12:00/1:50/2:30/3:10 4:30/5:10/5:50/7:10 7:50/8:30/9:25/9:50	10:30/6:30/7:10/9:10
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HOT/A2-3

AN MALL CINEMAS

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE: 3	SILENT HILL	THE SENTINEL	
12:25/3:05/5:45/8:25	12:20/3:00/5:40/8:20	1:15/3:35/5:55/8:15	
THE WILD	SLITHER	DOLBY DIGITAL 5.1DDS	
12:00/2:00/4:00/6:00/8:00	12:15/2:30/4:25/6:00/8:35		

For ticket inquiries, please call TicketNet at 911-5555 or log on to www.ticketnet.com.ph

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Sun. 6:30 STA LUCIA vs SAN MIGUEL

FRA LIPPO LIPPI CONCERT
MAY 13, Saturday 8:00 pm

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JOHN MARQUEZ

4 WOMEN WHO SHARED THEIR FIRST LOVE

...THEIR MUSIC AND 1 MAN

Turbo at the Promenade, Greenhills

APRIL 28 & 29 MAY 5, 6 AT 8PM.

"Bawdy, Blissful, Bitchy, Bountiful, Bratty!"

— NESTOR TORRE

"A FEEL GOOD MUSICAL... BONDING INTRO... GO SEE THE SHOW!"

— JOHN SILVA

"A giant consciousness raising session."

— RINA JIMENEZ DAVID

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WHAT'S INSIDE

Pre-need sales down 28%

Cut in oil import tariff seen

/B6

/B12

BUSINESS

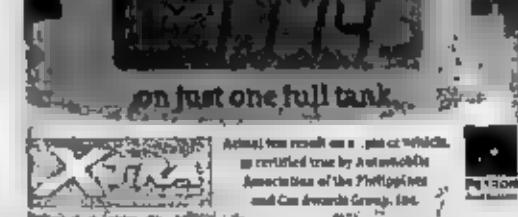
Editor Paul O. Marcelo • Assistant Editor Corrie S. Mariano

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Website: www.inq7money.net

From Pagudpud to Sorsogon

on just one full tank



Finance rejects tax relief for workers



FILIPINO jobseekers register during a two-day job fair offering more than 20,000 jobs in suburban Manila on Wednesday. The Philippines has a chronic unemployment problem, with nearly 3 million jobless Filipinos and millions others complaining of being underemployed. (See related story on Page B3.)

RP eyes \$9B worth of currency swap deals

By Doris C. Dumiao

THE PHILIPPINES IS NEGOTIATING up to \$9 billion worth of fresh bilateral currency swap deals with Japan, South Korea and China as part of measures to prevent the recurrence of external shocks similar to the Asian currency turmoil of 1997.

"This is part of the Chiang Mai initiative," Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Officer-in-Charge Diwa Guinigundo said yesterday.

In order to prevent a future regional currency crisis and to cope with such turmoil rapidly if and when this happens, the Chiang Mai initiative provides for the establishment of a network of bilateral swap arrangements to provide short-term liquidity among Asean countries plus China, Japan and the Republic of Korea.

Government sources said the bilateral currency swaps would involve as much as \$5 billion with Japan, \$3 billion with South Korea and \$1 billion

with China.

It would be the country's first time to enter into a currency swap deal with Japan and Korea while the arrangement with China would be a renewal of a previous agreement.

Guinigundo said the currency swap deals could be finalized this September at the sidelines of the International Monetary Fund-World Bank annual meetings in Singapore.

But other government sources said a preliminary framework could be agreed

Says foregone revenue can reach P7B

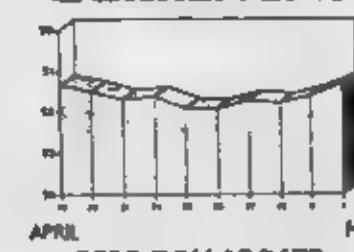
By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE has thumbed down a proposal from the labor department to give additional income tax relief to workers, saying the government should be conservative in giving incentives until it has fully resolved its deficit woes.

The Department of Labor and Employment specifically asked the DOF to increase the threshold amount of bonuses and benefits ex-

FINANCE/B6

INDICATORS CURRENCIES



APRIL MAY

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P \$1.43 = \$

As of 5 p.m., May 3, 2006

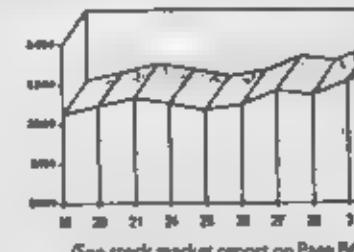
V \$13.82 = \$1

As of 5 p.m., May 2, 2006

GOLD: \$673.20-\$73.70

per ounce Hong Kong, May 3, 2006

STOCK MARKET



(See stock market report on Page B6)

Shares up another 1.53%

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 1.53 percent higher yesterday in follow-through buying, buoyed by an improving fiscal and corporate outlook, dealers said.

They said the tone was positive and recent gains look likely to be sustained as investors become more confident.

SHARES/B6

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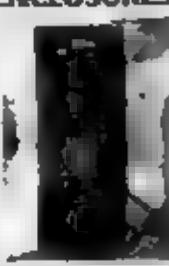
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Teves pushes time limit for Congress to pass bills

By Michelle V. Remo

GIVEN THE DELAYS IN THE PASSAGE of the proposed 2006 national budget, Finance Secretary Margarito Teves has proposed that legislators be given a time limit to act on urgent bills.

"We are government employees paid by taxpayers to do our job. (Legislators) should try to come up with good pieces of legislation at the least cost and within a reasonable time frame," Teves, who once served as congressman of Negros Oriental, said before he left for India Tuesday morning for the 39th annual meeting of the

Asian Development Bank.

Under Teves' proposal, the House of Representatives and the Senate will observe a prescribed period within which to act on urgent bills. For instance, he said, if the Lower House failed to act on a bill within a given time frame, the bill would be considered approved and automatically go to the Senate for the next stage of deliberations.

The finance chief said that to implement his proposal, the executive and the legislative branch could enter into an agreement as to the prescribed time frame, or legislators themselves

could sponsor a bill to turn the proposal into law.

Teves made the suggestion in an interview with reporters hours before members of the Senate were dismayed by his absence and that of two other Cabinet officials in a hearing last Tuesday on pending economic bills.

Congress recently won the favor of the Supreme Court, which said it was illegal for Malacañang to prohibit members of the executive branch to attend congressional hearings.

Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile was quoted as saying that if Cabinet officials were not interested in the legislative work of Congress, then legislators were also not interested in passing laws pushed by the executive branch.

Teves had to sacrifice attendance at the Senate hearing because he had to attend the annual meeting of the ADB together with other finance chiefs of other countries, the Department of Finance said.

Five months into the year, the legislative has yet to pass the P1.09-trillion national budget for 2006. Economic officials of the Arroyo administration have expressed concern over the delay, saying this would hamper the government's intention to pump-prime the economy.

Without the 2006 proposed budget, the government will be required to limit its spending within the 2005 budget, which stood at P963 billion.

Fiscal authorities said the proposed 2006 budget included additional funds for infrastructure development and enhancement of basic services, made possible partly by the additional revenues from the VAT Reform law.

The law, estimated to contribute P75 billion in incremental revenues, expanded the coverage of the value-added tax and raised the VAT rate to 12 percent from 10 percent.

STOCKHOLDERS OF THE CELEBRATED EQ-
itable PCI Bank will hold their annual meeting
soon. Their EXCITING annual meeting!

It's little wonder then that one of the bank's
major shareholders, the SM group of mall operator
Henry Sy, should be preparing for it with a flurry of maneuvers.

And from GSIS president and general manager Winston Garcia (the nemesis of Henry Sy's daughter Tessie Sy-Coson in her bid to take over the bank for a song) is sitting, those SM group moves are ... well, "ominous."

It looks like the SM group wants to be certain that, in the election of the board during the next annual stockholders' meeting, what the group says goes.

Among them, at least to the Cebu hometown boy Garcia, is for the SM group to take full control of the EPCIB board.

And from there—who knows—maybe full control of the bank? Uh-oh, there goes our P20 billion in the bank!

But why does Garcia see some portentous movements in the EPCIB board lately?

A few weeks ago, in a joint undertaking between the SM group and the ever, ahh, "cooperative" SSS, the EPCIB board replaced Martin Romualdez (representing Trans Middle East) as chair with SSS president Coronado dela Paz (representing 16 million SSS members, at least on paper).

Anyway, in another expected twist of fate just a few days ago, the EPCIB corporate secretary resigned for reasons still unknown to the public—meaning, the millions of SSS and GSIS members.

From what I hear, his replacement is now the subject of another quarrel between the SM group, on one hand, and those stockholders opposed to Tessie Sy Coson's takeover, on the other, namely, the GSIS and Trans Middle East.

The SM group is nominating its own guy to the position. And just how important is the corporate secretary to a stockholder like the SM group?

Under existing rules, the corporate secretary has the last word on the validation of "proxies." In turn, "proxies" are important to any group of stockholders who do not go along well with the other shareholders.

For the SM group, its relationship with the EPCIB stockholders like the GSIS has not only turned bad. It has escalated into war.

Now, just after the corporate secretary resigned, the EPCIB board decided to remove two more members of the "nominating" committee.

They were perceived to be against the SM group's takeover scheme.

That is the same committee that screens all the candidates to the EPCIB board, including the so-called independent directors required under the law.

First to go out of the critical committee was its chair, who was none other than Romualdez, the same man who has little faith in the takeover scheme of the SM group disguised as a merger.

And who should replace him other than

Omen of little faith

BREAKTIME



Conrado R. Banal III

Deja Paz again?

After that maneuver came the ouster of EPCIB president Rene Buenaventura from the committee.

Supposedly, Buenaventura volunteered to get out of the committee because its immediate business had something to do with "shareholders' issue." Hmm.

If that is so, then the more should a professional guy like Buenaventura stay in the committee, perhaps to look after the interest of the public investors in the bank. It is a LISTED company, right?

After all, as management representative to the board, Buenaventura represents all the stockholders—small and big alike—not just the SM group, or the SSS and the GSIS.

And so those are "omens" to Garcia, who is still trying to convince the SSS to bid out its shares in the bank together with those of the GSIS.

Obviously, if the SM group has its way in the annual stockholders' meeting, it can end up with more board seats in the bank.

Today, the SM group has four seats. Word has it nevertheless that one "independent" director also seems to be working for the SM group, plus another one nominated by the GSIS.

With the five board seats of the SSS, which has been, er, "sympathetic" to the SM group, Tessie Sy-Coson and company can do whatever they please with the bank.

THAT group in the real estate sector called Creba is up in arms against what it calls "historic high" prices of cement.

And the prices are high despite the generally silent construction sector. Well, this cute administration of Gloria Arroyo hardly does infrastructure projects, for one.

In a position paper submitted to this cute administration, Creba noted that the local cement price is now at P170 per bag—from a low of P70 per bag only four years ago when local cement companies were complaining against cement smuggling.

Today cement costs only an equivalent of P133 per bag in Malaysia, P129 in Indonesia, P119 in Vietnam, and P117 in Thailand.

Creba in effect thinks that the upsurge of the price here had something to do with shutdowns of local cement plants by their foreign owners.

Thus, Creba is supporting the move of the DTI and the BOI to include cement in the list of priority projects meriting incentives from the government.

The Creba paper said: "We urge the BOI and DTI to open the cement industry to more competition for the benefit of the consumers without delay."

Amen!

Shares up another 1.53%

From page B1

Volume was 3.93 billion shares worth P2.5 billion.

The all-shares index rose 19.82 points to 1,451.46.

Gainers outpaced losers 85 to 21, with 41 stocks unchanged.

"Our market is going from one strength to the next," said Lawrence de Leon of Accord Capital Equities Inc. "Obviously, this upward pressure is a combination of both strong earnings expectations and the country's improving fiscal outlook."

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said the other day that Moody's Investors Service might upgrade its negative outlook for the Philippines' credit ratings if the government meets its fiscal targets.

Of the three major international credit-rating agencies, only Moody's has a negative outlook on the country's sovereign ratings.

"We consider Moody's behind the curve. Fiscal consolidation is the basis of our view that the Philippines, like Korea, is a re-rating story," said Tim Condon, managing director of research in Asia at ING Asset Management in Singapore.

Ayala Land jumped 75 centavos to P13.25 and parent Ayala Corp. rose P12.50 to P382.50.

PLDT gained P5 to P2,045 while rival Globe Telecom advanced P25 to P960. Both telecom firms will report their first quarter earnings next week.

APP

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Our speaker is Dale Thompson, president of Canadian Professional and a Certified Canadian Immigration Consultant. Joining him is Ms. Thummey Alzona, our Client Services Officer who travels between Manila and Halifax as a Permanent Resident of Canada.

Benefits. The NSNP is a simple, straightforward, all-inclusive program that allows you to move to Canada on your own terms. Principal Applicants can keep their business/employment interests active in the Philippines. A guaranteed management position for Business Owners and Senior Managers is included. Permanent Resident Visas for the Principal Applicant, Spouse and their dependent children. Interview in Canada within 30 days of application submission. Approval within two weeks after interview.

Qualifications.

Potential candidates must meet BOTH the following minimum requirements:

- Personal Net Worth of CAD\$ 300,000
- Two (2) years of successful business ownership experience and/or senior management level experience

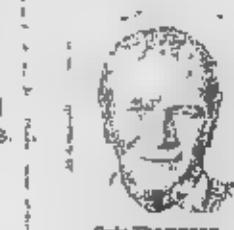
Briefing Locations, Dates and Times.

The immigration briefings will be held at Suite 1206, 12th Floor, Makati Cinema Square on Don Chino Roces Avenue. Attendance is FREE, however, candidates must be pre-qualified over the phone.

There will be maximum of 22 seats.

- Saturday, May 6 at 2:00 p.m.
- Sunday, May 7 at 2:00 p.m.

Meet Our Canadian Professionals



Dale Thompson



Thummey Alzona

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

We are pleased to announce that our senior consultant, Mr. Dale Thompson, has recently completed and passed the immigration exam as required by the Canadian Society of Immigration Consultants.

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STATEMENT OF CONDITION

(Head Office and Branches)

As of March 31, 2006

ASSETS

Cash and Cash Items	P 571,972,042.08
Due from Bangko Sentral	1,829,836,408.40
Due from Other Banks	2,220,432,548.67
Interbanks Loans Receivable	4,822,963,782.87
Trading Account Securities (Net)	728,718,039.05
Investments in Bonds and Other Debt Instruments (Net)	8,338,807,549.21
Loans, Discounts & Advances (Net)	30,646,800,931.42
Equity Investments (Net)	25,000,000.00
Bank Premises, Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment (Net)	1,760,377,400.97
Other Assets (Net):	
Property Owned/Acquired	1,786,680,020.46
Others	2,036,183,548.12
TOTAL ASSETS	P 54,767,772,271.25
LIABILITIES	
Demand Deposits	P 4,935,111,854.06
Savings Deposits	9,163,772,843.22
Time Deposits	32,030,554,623.04
Due to Bangko Sentral	22,986,238.38
Outstanding Checks/Payment Orders	212,485,785.30
Bills Payable	
Others	1,964,216,113.44
Unearned Income & Other Deferred Credits	75,705,294.99
Other Liabilities	1,484,672,286.40
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P 49,669,505,048.83
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	
Capital Stock	P 1,795,015,200.00
Surplus	2,651,081,487.98
Surplus Reserves	452,170,534.44
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P 4,888,267,222.42
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	
Bills for Collection	P 407,063.38
Assets Held Under Trust and Investment Management Agreements	171,371,112.16
Invested in:	
Government Securities	2,145,122.12
Other Securities, Debt Instruments and Shares of Stock	99,029,099.03
Other Assets	70,196,891.01
Accountabilities:	
Trust & Other Fiduciary Investment/Fund Management	171,371,112.16
Other Contingent Accounts	68,487,678.60
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	P 240,265,854.14
Additional Information:	
1. Deposits of:	
a) Government	29,578,100.23
b) Banks	70,00



Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Manila

CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES AND PERIODS OF PROHIBITED ACTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE MAY 22, 2006 PLEBISCITES TO RATIFY THE CREATION OF THE MUNICIPALITIES OF UNGKAYA PUAN AND AL-BARKA OUT OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF TIPO TIPO, BASILAN, AND THE MUNICIPALITIES OF HADJI MOHAMMAD AJUL AND AKBAR OUT OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF TUBURAN, BASILAN PURSUANT TO MUSLIM MINDANAO AUTONOMY ACT NOS. 190, 191, 192 AND 193 PASSED BY THE REGIONAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO ON 20 DECEMBER 2005.

Promulgated: 2 May 2006

RESOLUTION NO. 7659

Pursuant to the powers vested in it by the Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code, the Local Government Code (Republic Act No. 7160), Republic Act No. 7166, and other election laws, the Commission on Elections RESOLVED to adopt, as it hereby RESOLVES to adopt, the following Calendar of Activities and Periods on Prohibited Acts for the May 22, 2006 plebiscites to ratify the creation of the municipalities of Ungkaya Puan and Al-Baraka out of the municipality of Tipo Tipe, Basilan, and the municipalities of Hadji Mohammad Ajul and Akbar out of the municipality of Tuburan, Basilan, pursuant to MMA Act No. 190, 191, 192 and 193, passed by the RLA, ARMM on 20 December 2005, to wit:

DATE/PERIOD	PLEBISCITE ACTIVITIES	PROHIBITED ACTS
May 1, 2006 (MON) to May 25, 2006 (THU)	PLEBISCITE PERIOD	

PLEBISCITE PERIOD

1. Bearing, carrying or transporting firearms or other deadly weapons in public places, including any building, street, park, private vehicle or public conveyance, even if licensed to possess or carry the same, unless authorized in writing by the Commission. (Sec. 261 (p) (e) (s) OEC as amended by Sec. 32 R.A. No. 7166;
2. Suspension of elective local officials. (Sec. 261 (x) OEC);
3. Transfer of officers and employees in the Civil Service. (Sec. 261 (h) OEC);
4. Organization or maintenance of reaction forces, strike forces or other similar forces. (Sec. 261 (u) OEC);
5. Appointment or hiring of new employees. (Sec. 261 (g) OEC);
6. Creation or filling up of new positions. (Sec. 261 (j) OEC);
7. Promotions or giving of salary increases, remuneration or privilege. (Sec. 261 (p) OEC);
8. Construction of public works, delivery of materials for public works and issuance of treasury warrants or similar devices for a future undertaking chargeable against public funds. (Sec. 261 (w) OEC);
9. Release or disbursements of expenditures of public works and social services and development. (Sec. 261 (v) OEC);
10. Appointment or use of special policemen, special/confidential agents or the like. (Sec. 261 (m) OEC);
11. Use of armored land, water or aircraft. (Sec. 261 (f) OEC);
12. Wearing of uniforms and bearing of arms. (Sec. 261 (s) OEC).

May 1, 2006 (MON) to May 22, 2006 (MON)

CAMPAIGN PERIOD

May 1, 2006 (MON) to May 20, 2006 (SAT)

May 8, 2006 (WED)

Submission to Committee of special list of all special policeman, special/confidential agents or persons performing similar functions in the capacity of barangay chairman, municipal mayor or any appointing authority

Last day for appointment of members of Plebiscite Committees

May 1, 2006 (MON) to May 22, 2006 (MON)

Posting of the Certified List of Voters as of the May 10, 2004 elections.

May 21, 2006 (SUN) INSPECTION OF POLLING PLACES

May 22, 2006 (MON) PLEBISCITE DAY

Liquor Ban (starting 12 Midnight) - Selling, furnishing, offering, buying, serving or taking intoxicating liquor, etc (Sec. 261 (dd), (1), OEC)

1. Cockfighting, and other forms of gambling, holding fairs, boxing and/or any other similar sports. (Sec. 261 (dd), (1), OEC);
2. Giving, accepting, free transportation, food, drinks, and things of value. (Sec. 58, OEC);
3. Setting, furnishing, offering, buying, serving or taking intoxicating liquor, etc. (Sec. 261 (dd), (1), OEC);
4. Opening of booths or stalls for the sale of merchandise, refreshment, etc. within 30 meters radius from polling place (Sec. 261 (dd) (2) OEC).

Let this Resolution be published by the Education and Information Department (EID) in a newspaper of general circulation, and in a newspaper with local circulation in the Municipalities of Tipo Tipe and Tuburan, Basilan. The Deputy Executive Director for Operations shall furnish the Regional Election Director of ARMM, the Provincial Election Supervisor of Basilan and the Election Officers of Tipo Tipe and Tuburan, Basilan, the Secretary of the Department of Education, the Governor of Basilan, the Municipal Mayor and Municipal Treasurers of Tipo Tipe and Tuburan, Basilan, and the DepEd Supervisor of Basilan, with a copy of this Resolution.

The Election Officers of Tipo Tipe and Tuburan, Basilan, shall give this Resolution the widest publication in their municipalities.

This Resolution shall take effect upon its promulgation.

W. S. Abalos
BENJAMIN S. ABALOS
Chairman

R. A. Brawner
ROMEO A. BRAWNER
Commissioner

R. V. Sarmiento
RENE V. SARMENTO
Commissioner

F. Tuason
FLORENTINO TUASON, JR.
Commissioner

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BUSINESS

THURSDAY, MAY 4, 2006

B
Q1 pre-need sales down 28%Life, education
plans segments
post biggest drop

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE FINANCIAL HEALTH OF PRE-NEED firms remained fragile as sales dipped 27.8 percent to P5 billion in the first quarter of the year from P6.94 billion in the same period last year, data from the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) showed.

Sales of life plans recorded the biggest drop of 58.3 percent to P676.3 million in the first quarter from P1.62 billion in the same quarter last year.

Sales of education plans fell 57.6 percent to P1.04 billion from P2.45 billion last year.

The pension plans segment of the industry, however, bucked the trend as sales rose 15 percent to P3.3 billion in the first quarter from P2.86 billion in the same period last year.

The total number of plans sold fell 38.42 percent to 65,912 in the first quarter from 107,033 in the same period in 2005.

Life plans led the drop as the number of plans sold declined 59.8 percent followed by education plans which contracted 59.6 percent.

For March alone, total sales declined 41.95 percent to P1.47 billion from P2.54 billion in the same month last year.

Education plans sold plunged 58 percent to P327.3 million in March from P776.81 million in the same month last year.

Life plans sales during the month, likewise, dropped 55.5 percent to P227.2 million. Sales of pension plans was lower by 26.5 percent to P921 million in March.



TOP PERFORMER AWARD

Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) recently conferred Metrobank with the "All Around Performance" award in recognition of its active participation and commitment to DBP's development efforts. Metrobank was commended for being a top performing Participating Financial Institution partner that supports the government's development goals via specialized lending. Metrobank vice chair Placido Mapa (4th from left) received the plaque from Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Armando Tetangco Jr. Looking on are DBP president and chief executive officer Reynaldo David and DBP chair Antonio Alindogan Jr.

Ayala to offer P3B worth of preferred shares

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

A SCHEDULED STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING today of listed firm Philcomsat Holdings Corp. (PHC), an affiliate of Philippine Communications Satellite Corp. Inc., hangs in the balance as a shareholder files for a court order to stop the meet.

PHC director Manuel Nieto Jr. has asked the Court of Appeals to stop the stockholders meeting slated for today as ordered by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

As of press time yesterday, SEC Chair Fe Barin said the SEC had not received any word from the court on the Nieto petition.

Barin also said the validation of proxies to determine who would participate in today's stockholders' meeting had proceeded yesterday.

In a petition filed with the appellate court on April 18, Nieto asked the CA to prevent the SEC from performing acts deemed "arbitrary, whimsical, unjust, unreasonable and unfair, tantamount to a grave abuse of discretion." It also asked the court to annul and set aside three orders issued by the SEC and to defer the PHC stockholders' meeting.

Nieto also claimed that the SEC had issued "ultra vires" orders under the guise and pretense of merely directing Philcomsat to call its annual shareholders' meeting this year. Ultra vires refers to orders issued outside the authority of the issuing party.

Nieto argued that these arbitrary acts were causing prejudice, injury and damage to the petitioner, as well as the members of the

board of directors, and other shareholders of the sequestered corporations Philippine Overseas Telecommunications Corp. and its subsidiary Philcomsat.

The government, by virtue of sequestered shares, owns 35 percent of POTC, which owns 100 percent of Philcomsat, the controlling shareholder of PHC.

Nieto is asking the appellate court to stop the SEC from deciding on legal issues which are not within its powers under the Securities Regulation Code. It also asked the court to annul and set aside three assailed orders of the SEC which will in turn, endanger PHC's corporate life.

On Feb. 26, respondent SEC and general counsel Vernetta Umali-Paco issued its first order directing PHC to hold its annual stockholders' meeting not later than April 17 and prescribing guidelines in forming a nominations and elections committee. On March 10, Nieto filed his letter asking the SEC to reconsider its decision and defer the calling of the annual meeting.

Nieto further claimed that on April 4, the SEC issued its second assailed order scheduling the stockholders' meeting today, May 4.

On the same day, the SEC issued a third order denying Nieto's motion for reconsideration. The SEC said that holding an annual stockholders' meeting for PHC was proper after the Supreme Court approved a compromise agreement last June 15 between shareholders Potenciano Ilusorio and the government settling issues over who will represent POTC and Philcomsat in PHC.

Filinvest to issue P1B worth of 5-year notes

FILINVEST DEVELOPMENT Corp., the holding company of the Filinvest Group, is issuing this week P1 billion worth of five-year corporate notes to raise funds for its resort project in Cebu and for debt payment, officials said.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, FDC said it would issue the notes to state-

led Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) on Friday. An omnibus corporate notes facility and security agreement was signed by the company and DBP yesterday.

The notes will be secured by real estate mortgage on the company's property in Mactan, Cebu, and a pledge of certain common

and preferred shares of Filinvest Asia Corp. held by FDC.

In its meeting yesterday, FDC's board of directors approved the execution of the said agreement.

FDC is launching this year a new leisure development dubbed Seaside Resort Town. Seaside sits on a 12-hectare seaside prop-

erty located in Mactan, Cebu. The proposed resort community will offer private lots, casitas, villas, condominium units and a beach club. The world-class resort is geared toward the booming tourists trade and is intended to fill the shortage in prime tourists destination in Cebu. Elizabeth L. Sanchez

Finance rejects tax relief ...

From page B1

empted from the income tax.

The threshold is currently set at P30,000, which means bonuses and benefits (such as Christmas bonus, and productivity incentives) in excess of this amount is subject to income tax.

The DOF wanted the amount increased to P45,000 to factor in inflation since the late 1990s when the P30,000 ceiling was set.

But the DOF said the proposal would result in huge revenue losses for the government. A finance official said preliminary estimates showed that the government stand to lose between P5 billion and P7 billion in potential revenues if the government would adopt DOF's proposal.

"Right now, the DOF's position is that the government should first focus on the proposal to exempt minimum wage earners from the income tax," the finance official said. Ideally, the official added, benefits to other income groups that would result in any foregone revenues for the government should be tackled only after the government shall have wiped out its budget deficit.

The DOF earlier threw its support behind a

proposal to exempt minimum wage earners from the income tax. A bill on the proposal is pending in Congress.

While waiting for the bill to be passed, the Bureau of Internal Revenue already issued a revenue regulation requiring employers to temporarily defer withholding the income tax of employees until next year.

The DOF and the BIR are hoping that the bill formally exempting employees from the income tax will have already been passed by next year.

The finance official said exempting only minimum wage earners from the income tax was something the government could afford because it would only lead to P500 million in potential tax collection to be lost a year.

Labor Secretary Patricia Santo Tomas said in a letter to the DOF that her office's proposal would have been a nice gift to workers during the Labor Day celebration. She said workers needed reprieve given the increasing cost of living.

Under the government's fiscal program, the budget deficit stood at P146.8 billion last year and is expected to be trimmed down to P125 billion this year. The government expects the deficit to fall to zero by 2008.

RP eyes \$9B ...

From page B1

ties, including those provided by the IMF.

In principle, the financial assistance links to the IMF facilities. Up to 10 percent of the maximum amount of withdrawals could be provided without linkage with the IMF facilities.

The maximum amount of drawdown under each arrangement will be determined by bilateral negotiation.

Disbursement will be made in a concerted way based on consultation among the swap-providing countries. A coordinating country will coordinate the consultation process.

In the aftermath of the 1997 currency crisis, Japan proposed the creation of an Asian monetary fund as a framework for promoting financial cooperation and policy coordination in the region, which would help Asian economies prevent and manage better future financial crises. The proposal received a positive response from a number of East Asian countries, but was opposed by the United States, the European community and the IMF.

The Chiang Mai initiative, named after the region in northern Thailand where the framework was crafted in 2000, was the closest alternative to a regional defense mechanism that the region was able to establish.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of May 3, 2006)

STOCKS	HIGH	CLOSE	VOLUME
Astaftrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.8	5.8	369,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	35.5	35.5	78,200
Bank of the Philippines	62.5	62.5	5,819,700
Citystate Savings Bank	20.25	20.25	340
Expo 1 Anilac Bank A	0.45	0.42	8,020,000
Equitable PC Bank Inc.	73.5	74.5	166,200
Intertelcoms Tech. Bank	25	25	314,700
Min. Exporters & Trust	38	38	1,209,500
Philippine Investors Bank	34	34	37,400
Phil. Savings Bank	38.5	38.5	1,100
Plaza Comm. B. Banking Corp.	18.5	18.5	64,800
Sec. in't Bank Corp.	53.5	53.5	403,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	41.5	41.5	53,000
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS			
First Metro Inv. Corp.	30	30	8,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	3200	3200	8,000
PC Leasing & Fin. Inc.	0.98	0.98	4,700
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	200	200	210
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2,155	2,155	2,150
Vantage Corp.	1.4	1.4	14,650
INDUSTRIAL, ENERGY, POWER &			
First Gen Corp.	44.5	45	59,000
First Phil Hedge Corp.	45	45	567,200
Manila Electric Co. A	13	13.5	20,400
Manila Electric Co. B	18.75	19.25	70,700
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.8	7.4	26,729,200
Petrofin Corp.	4.4	4.4	3,002,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.98	0.98	260,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO			
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.5	3.5	4,000
CADP Group Corp.	3.2	3.15	132,000
Can Azucarado Tercer	2.05	2.05	1,500
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	2.65	2.65	1,000
Globeリア San Miguel Inc.	2.5	2.5	218,900
Jollibee Foods Corp.	2.25	2.25	554,000
PCP Corp.	0.75	0.75	160,000
Rock Holdings Inc.	3.5	3.5	60,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.185	0.185	20,700
San Miguel Corp. A	82.5	84	45,000
San Miguel Corp. B	60.5	61	157,000
Phil. Tel Blue Corp. & Reddy	10.5	10.5	13,900
Universal Robina Corp.	23	23	4,266,000
Vinamilk Corp.	0.26	0.26	90,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES			
South East Asian Cement	0.33	0.33	1,450,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.58	1.58	13,575,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	1.2	1.2	2,200,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	5.2	5.2	2,097,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.001	0.008	32,100,000
Starmill Manufacturing	0.5	0.5	580,000
HOLDING FIRMS			
Atok-Bis Wedco Co. Inc.	5.5	5.5	1,000
Abacus Con Pals & Hog A	0.075	0.008	78,000,000
Ayala Corp.	382.5	370	211,540
Alsons Corp. Res. Inc.	0.53	0.53	160,000
Abolitz Equity Ventures	8	8	2,318,000
Ayo Min Holdings Inc.	0.024	0.025	71,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.6	2.6	2,450,000
APC Group Inc.	0.21	0.21	1,000,000
Alcon Gold Corp.	0.0085	0.0085	29,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.52	0.52	11,080,000
Baogold Gold Holdings Corp.	0.2	0.2	14,000
Bacolod City Indus. Inc.	9.2	9.2	10,500
Bengbu Gold Corp.	0.98	0.98	7,750,000
DMC Holdings Inc.	4.35	4.45	2,331,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	3.45	3.45	1,745,000
House of Investments Inc.	1.54	1.54	340,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	7.2	7.8	250,000
Parcila	0.012	0.013	146,120,000
Prima Orion Phils. Inc.	0.225	0.225	14,300,000
Shoichi Corp.	0.15	0.145	14,000,000
SM Investments Corp.	225	230	230,000
Seafirst Resources Corp.	0.7	0.61	89,000
Unifil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.0675	0.0675	500,000
Wellco Industries Inc.			

Asia absorbs crude oil price shock, analysts say

Conservation efforts cushion impact of rising prices

SINGAPORE—CURBS ON ENERGY usage and fuel-efficient technology have helped minimize inflation across oil-dependent Asian economies, cushioning the impact of spiraling oil prices, analysts said.

State subsidies, even if costly, and sound government finances are other factors helping countries absorb the effects of rising consumer prices.

For analysts, the biggest unanswered question is at what point will inflation rates buckle under pressure from the record-high oil prices which have gushed past \$75 a barrel.

So far, consumer and business sentiments have held up.

"Have we seen consumers being hit by sharply higher prices for everyday items? The answer is no," said Song Seng Wun, a regional economist with CIMB-GK brokerage in Singapore.

But "there has to be a breaking point," he warned, adding that it was "anybody's guess" when this may happen.

Takahira Ogawa, director for Asia Pacific Ratings at US credit rating firm Standard and Poor's, said the impact on inflation will depend on the duration of the oil price surge and will differ for individual Asian economies.

Nicholas Brooks, London-based senior economist at Henderson Global Investors, said headline inflation rates in most of Asia have risen due to higher fuel costs, but core prices excluding energy items have remained relatively subdued.

Economies with large current account surpluses, sound fiscal positions and stable net capital inflows are in a better position to cope should crude prices stay above \$70 a barrel for a sustained period, Brooks added.

These would include Singapore, Hong Kong, China and Malaysia. Countries seen as vulnerable are India, Thailand, the Philippines, Taiwan and South Korea, he said.

Regional economies and industries have begun taking measures to cope with higher energy costs by using alternative fuels such as ethanol and adopting measures to cut down on energy consumption.

In Thailand, consumption of gasohol—a mixture of oil and plant fuels—has quadrupled in the last year to hit 3.4 million liters a day in March when total fuel consumption was 70 million litres per day.

In the Philippines, the government said it will lower oil import tariffs, while President Macapagal-Arroyo announced plans to promote greater use of ethanol and other fuel alternatives.

Indonesia, which faces higher fuel subsidy bills, said it may impose restrictions on fuel consumption for vehicles, but this would first be discussed with parliament, said National Planning Minister Paskah Suzetta. *AFP*



THE DISCOVERER Deep Seas drillship sits in 4,000 feet of water as Chevron drills for oil. Oil prices rose above \$74 a barrel amid fear that international pressure on Iran to modify its nuclear program may lead to supply cuts from the key exporter.

Asian stocks rise

SINGAPORE—ASIAN SHARES ROSE YES-
TERDAY after buoyant oil prices boosted ma-
jor energy shares in New York, pushing US
stocks to their highest close in more than
six years.

Gold hit another 25-year high on per-
manent fund buying driven by a weak dollar
and as crude oil prices hovered just below
\$75 a barrel, within sight of record highs
on mounting tension over Iran's nuclear
plans.

Strong bullion prices pushed up shares
of gold miners in Australia and Hong Kong
such as Newcrest Mining Ltd. and Zijin
Mining Group Co. Ltd. rose 1.08 percent.

The Tokyo stock market was closed for the
Golden Week holiday period but other Asian
bourses surged, led by Hong Kong and Tai-
wan, both of which hit 5-1/2-year highs.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng index was near-
ly 1 percent higher as investors snapped up
shares in property plays thanks to strong
April sales and laggards such as HSBG
Holdings.

Taiwan stocks closed up 0.59 percent af-
ter hitting a fresh 5-1/2-year intraday high
and Indian shares touched a new peak be-
fore retreating as profit-taking set in.

South Korea's benchmark KOSPI share
index ended flat as banks such as Hana Fi-
nancial scaled record highs after solid
quarterly results, while Samsung Electron-
ics Co. and other exporters extended de-
clines on worries over a rising won.

In Singapore, the key Strait Times index
climbed as much as 1.27 percent to a
record, as banks rose on expectations of
strong earnings following robust results
from No. 1 bank DBS Group.

Gold has gained around 29 percent this
year as investors diversified into precious
metals on global tensions, rising energy costs
and uncertainty over the dollar's outlook.

The US dollar hit an eight-month low
against the sterling and hovered near re-
cent one-year lows versus the euro, having
failed to extend gains on renewed talk
about more US interest rate rises. *Reuters*

ADB meets to set path for Asia, itself

HYDERABAD, INDIA—THE ASIAN Development Bank (ADB) opened its annual meeting yesterday to set the course for strengthening the region's economies while trying to serve the often diverging interests of its 65 members.

Founded in 1966 with a mandate to elevate hundreds of millions of Asians from poverty, the ADB's members range from struggling Nepal and Bangladesh to booming China and India to its largest and most powerful donors, Japan and the United States.

The challenges of economic integra-
tion, high oil prices, protectionism,
bird flu and Asia's huge infrastruc-
ture needs are high on the four-
day agenda for finance officials,
bankers and the rest of the 2,500 del-
egates in the Indian city of Hyder-
abad.

Calls for developing countries to
help fix global imbalances through
exchange rate flexibility will be in the
spotlight on Thursday at a meeting of

finance chiefs from Southeast Asian
nations plus China, Japan and South
Korea (Asean+3).

Japanese officials said the
Asean+3 ministers will also discuss
fine-tuning a six-year-old currency
swap mechanism and expanding do-
mestic debt markets—both designed
to ward off the kind of financial crisis
that hit the region in 1997/98.

"Delegates will be looking at how
to address poverty in the context of
these challenges and a rapidly chang-
ing Asia and, in particular, how the
ADB can respond to the region's
changing needs," the bank said in a
statement.

The ADB expects economic growth
in Asia, not including Japan, of 7.2
percent this year and 7 percent in
2007 as China and other big ex-
porters ride on robust global trade
and electronics demand.

Like the World Bank and Interna-
tional Monetary Fund, the ADB is be-
ing forced to re-examine its role in

dealing with imbalances in the glo-
bal economy and the evolving de-
mands of developing countries for fi-
nance, fiscal guidance and a stronger
voice.

China and India, in particular,
now have ready access to funding
from international capital markets
and want more innovative policies
and faster decisions from the ADB,
which gave members \$6.95 billion
in loans and grants for projects last
year.

"We need to change further and
substantially," the bank's president,
Haruhiko Kuroda, told *Reuters* in a
recent interview.

Traditionally led by a Japanese
president, the ADB has not been able
to shake off criticism that it is too bu-
reaucratic, too consensus-driven and
too slow to react.

"It's like a Japanese company run
by Indian bureaucrats," said one ADB
staffer who asked not to be named.

Reuters

People, Events & Products

G-Cash partners with PRC

THE PROFESSIONAL WORKFORCE is the backbone of a nation's economic performance, especially for a country like the Philippines, which relies on revenues remitted by overseas foreign workers. To ensure that the country continues to produce world-class professionals, the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) has kept up with the latest technological innovations and practices, partnering with Globe G-Cash—the country's first integrated mobile payments system—in establishing its flagship project, the Licensure Examination and Registration Information System (Leris).

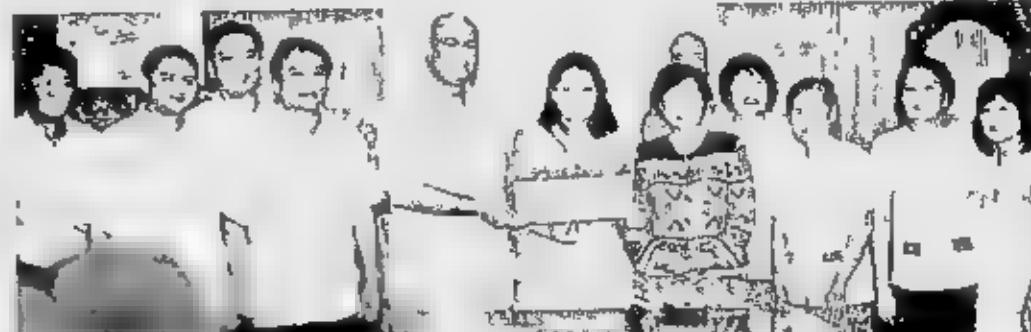
Leris is a reliable, secure, and globally accessible professional licensure system that enables online application, registration, and payment of professional licenses and fees, walk-in computer-based examinations se-

cured by a test questions database management system, as well legal management and executive information systems. Globe G-Cash powers Leris' multi-channel online payment facility, allowing license applicants to pay their testing fees via mobile phone anytime, anywhere.

"Integrating G-Cash into the Leris system will definitely make fee collection more convenient, as well as simplify the process of generating financial reports," said PRC chairperson Leonor Rosero, noting that the computerization of such procedures is part of the government's modernization plan—which Globe G-Cash has consistently taken part in. Globe G-Cash is recognized by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas as a secure, alternative payment system, and is the Bureau of Internal Revenue's trusted partner in fa-

cilitating mobile micropayments of business registration renewals. Aside from micropayments, Globe G-Cash also enables the mobile transfer of cash values for domestic and international remittance.

The service is supported by an open platform that easily integrates into existing business systems, making Globe G-Cash highly adaptable to suit the needs of both government institutions and private industries, says Rizza Maniego-Eala, president of G-Xchange Inc., Globe's wholly-owned subsidiary tasked to oversee the development of m-commerce in the Philippines. "This latest collaboration with PRC is further proof of the continued growth of m-commerce in the country, and Globe G-Cash takes pride in participating in such a milestone project," notes Eala.



LPCI AWARDS P5 MILLION PENSION PLAN BENEFIT TO MSEUF

Loyola Plans Consolidated Inc. (LPCI) represented by its senior vice president for strategic sales, Elias Micael III (center), awarded P5.311,520 worth of pension plan benefit to Manuel S. Enverga University Foundation (MSEUF) president, Nelia Enverga-Leveriza, last April 17, in their campus at Lucena City. Shown are (from left): Lope Papa - LPCI group

business manager, LPCI regional directors from South Luzon Cluster - Emmanuel Ladines, Karl Marc Co and cluster head - Samuel Moreno, MSEUF vice president for administration, Jasmine Enverga, Casar Wong (behind), Erlinda Micor Amelia Delos Reyes, Josefina Pujanes and LPCI group business manager, Evelyn Rodriguez

AIM's Master in Management 30th Grand Leadership Walk-About

THE ASIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT (AIM) Master in Management (MM) program will be hosting a series of activities in celebration of its 30th Anniversary on May 5, at the AIM Campus in Makati.

The whole day affair will commence at 8 a.m. with a ribbon cutting ceremony to open the MM exhibit entitled MM: Then and Now. This will be succeeded by a live case discussion on the development of San Miguel Super Coffee Mix Inc to be led by San Miguel Super Coffee Mix president and CEO, Debbie Namatatu (MM '2002).

The afternoon activities will begin with a luncheon featuring a lecture on Bridging Leadership by Prof. Ernesto Garlao (MM '82) of the AIM Washington SyCip Graduate School of Business (WGSB). After which, a session on the status of leadership today with prominent alumni, Datuk Dr. Mohd Anas Hj. Mohd Noor (MM '84), special advisor Genting Power, International Business of Genting Power Holdings Ltd., and Subodh Saxena, (MM '78), chief executive officer of Hayat Telecommunications,

will be held at the AIM Campus and will be beamed to MM alumni and guests in Mumbai and New Delhi, India, Malaysia, Dubai, UAE and Indonesia via the facilities of the AIM - World Bank Global Distance Learning Center.

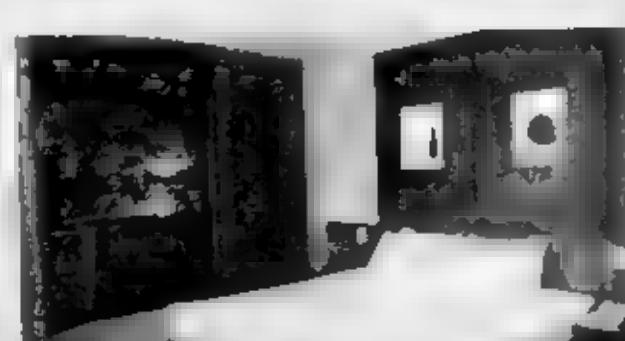
The MM 30th Anniversary celebration will culminate with "30th MM Anniversary: A Celebration of Leadership Excellence", a recognition dinner honoring MM's past program directors and faculty members, to be held at the Zen Garden of the AIM Campus, at 6 p.m.

The MM 30th Anniversary celebration is made possible through the sponsorship of Smart, Petron and Panasonic. For more information about this event, please contact Queenie, at 892-4011 ext. 285, Edythe at 894-0043 or Rha at 750-6575. MM alumni are also invited to link to the MM yahoo group via aim-mm-alumni@yahoo.com to keep informed about the MM 30th anniversary celebration, developments in the MM program, other activities, and news about the MM alumni across the globe.

Product FILES

Earth, wind and sand

THE BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB IS THE PERFECT PRIVATE OASIS offering the charm of both old and new Baguio. This summer, the club is offering a special package called "Beach Escape", combining the best of the north—the cool Benguet mountains, and the magnificent China Sea. Relax in their cozy rooms full of delightful touches like cable television, refrigerator, floor-to-ceiling windows and a private balcony with a spectacular view of the valley or the refreshing greens of the 18-hole golf course. While staying in this first class exclusive club, you will be treated to spend a day to enjoy a rejuvenating swim in the tranquil sea just a couple of hours' drive away. What's more, experience showers of savings this June 15 to Sept. 15. The Club is offering the "Stay and Play Package" for individual bookings and its "Corporate Retreat Specials" for groups. These packages will help you make the most of your stay in Baguio Country Club. By paying for 2 nights stay upon arrival, guests are provided with a 1 time unlimited free recreation usage of your choice. A host of outdoor and indoor pleasures available



are golf, badminton, tennis, bowling, billiards, table tennis, sauna, heated swimming pool and Jacuzzi, kid's club, and fitness center. To conclude the stay, one can leisurely take the time and have a late check-out of until 3 p.m. Indicate the name of the magazine where you read this when you ask for these special packages to receive a free gift. E-mail them at bcosales@tri-sys.com.

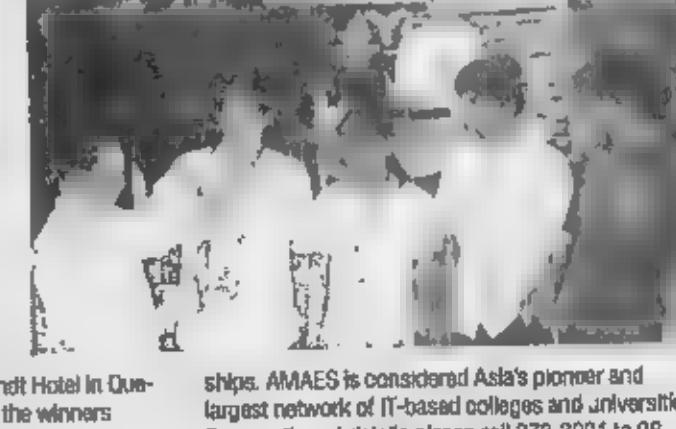
Whirlpool's Whispure: Engineered to provide effortless comfort

FOR GENERATIONS, WHIRLPOOL HOME APPLIANCES HAS been in the forefront of introducing home appliances of utmost quality to the Filipino people. They have been one of the most trusted brands in Philippines. And to start the year right, Whirlpool is proud to introduce—Whispure, the latest Split Type Air Conditioner in the market today. Whispure boasts of 6th Sense Technology, an "Intelligent" sensor that detects temperature changes and automatically makes adjustments thus, preserving excellent room cooling conditions. Another feature is its Ionizer Filter which releases negative ions that purifies the air around it. Also, its Jet Mode Function allows a hot, energized room to cool in a matter of minutes. All these features are in place to ensure that coming home is always a

comfortable and relaxing experience and with appliances designed for exceptional performance, Whirlpool Home Appliances makes it possible for us to enjoy these pleasant benefits at the comfort of own homes. The product is available in 1.0, 1.5, 2.0, and 2.5 horsepower. Please visit your nearest Whirlpool showroom or call 732-7370 for details.

AMA IT OLYMPIAD GRAND CHAMPIONS

Dr. Patrick Atain T. Azanza, SVP for operations of AMA Education System is shown awarding the trophy to the AMA IT Olympiad 2006 grand champions (from left) Abdel Hadi M. Mohammad Isa, Olive Ruth A. Dag, Kit Lorenzo M. Ayoc, and their coach Bernard A. Beduya of Philippine Science High School Southern Mindanao, Davao City. The grand finals was held last March 21, at the Rembrandt Hotel in Davao City. Representing Region 11, the winners brought home P100,000 in cash as well as scholar-



ships. AMAES is considered Asia's pioneer and largest network of IT-based colleges and universities. For enrollment details please call 373-3901 to 06.

JOSE Y. CAMPOS

*Passed away peacefully in the Grace of our Lord
on May 1, 2006 at the age of 84.*

*His loving wife
BEATRICE*

*Children
JOY
BUTCH & OLLIE
JEFFREY
ELIZABETH*

*Grandchildren
CLINTON & JACQUELINE
CHRISSEY
MIKEY
JEANETTE
JACLYN & LUKE
JAY
JANELLE
JAMIE
NIÑA*

request family and friends to join them in prayer for the eternal repose of his soul.

*His remains will lie in state at the Unilab Main Compound,
United Street, Mandaluyong City, on Friday, May 5th.
On Saturday, May 6th, his remains will be transferred to
Sanctuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City.*

Holy Mass will be offered daily at 7 o'clock in the evening.

*On Monday, May 8th, after Holy Mass at 11 o'clock in the morning at Sanctuario,
cremation will follow at 2 o'clock in the afternoon at the
Heritage Memorial Park, Bayani Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.*

Please omit flowers.

*The Stockholders, Board of Directors, Management and Staff
of*

**UNITED LABORATORIES, INC.
UNILAB GROUP OF COMPANIES
GREENFIELD GROUP OF COMPANIES**

*announce with deepest sorrow the passing away
in the Grace of our Lord on May 1, 2006
of our beloved*

**FOUNDER & CHAIRMAN EMERITUS
JOSE Y. CAMPOS**

*His remains will lie in state at the Unilab Main Compound,
United Street, Mandaluyong City on Friday evening, May 5th.
On Saturday afternoon, May 6th, his remains will be transferred to
Sanctuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City.*

Holy Mass will be offered at 7 o'clock in the evening.

Please omit flowers.



The Stockholders, Board of Directors, Management and Staff

of

NUTRIASIA GROUP OF COMPANIES
Southeast Asia Food, Inc.
UFC Philippines, Inc.

mourn the passing away in the Grace of our Lord on May 1, 2006 of

JOSE Y. CAMPOS

*father of Joselito D. Campos Jr.
Chairman of the Board of NutriAsia Group of Companies*

*His remains will lie in state at the Unilab Main Compound,
United Street, Mandaluyong City, on Friday evening, May 5th.
On Saturday afternoon, May 6th, his remains will be transferred to
Sanctuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City.*

Holy Mass will be offered daily at 7 o'clock in the evening.

*On Monday, May 8th, after Holy Mass at 11 o'clock in the morning at Sanctuario,
cremation will follow at 2 o'clock in the afternoon at the
Heritage Memorial Park, Bayani Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.*

Please omit flowers.

The Stockholders, Board of Directors, Management and Staff

of

DEL MONTE PACIFIC LIMITED

mourn the passing away in the Grace of our Lord on May 1, 2006 of

JOSE Y. CAMPOS

*father of Joselito D. Campos Jr.
Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Del Monte Pacific Limited.*

*His remains will lie in state at the Unilab Main Compound,
United Street, Mandaluyong City, on Friday evening, May 5th.
On Saturday afternoon, May 6th, his remains will be transferred to
Sanctuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City.*

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Heritage Memorial Park, Bayani Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.*

Please omit flowers.



Republic of the Philippines DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

DEPARTMENT CIRCULAR NO. DC2006-04-004

ADOPTING DEPARTMENT CIRCULAR NO. DC 2004-04-004 ENTITLED "GUIDELINES ON THE ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATE OF ACCREDITATION AND CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY TO IMPORT UNDER THE NATURAL GAS VEHICLE PROGRAM FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT" AS THE IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS OF EXECUTIVE ORDER NOS. 396 AND 488 DATED DECEMBER 31, 2004 AND JANUARY 12, 2006, RESPECTIVELY, AND DEPARTMENT CIRCULAR DC NO. 2006-07-006 DATED JULY 5, 2006 AND AMENDING CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE SAID D.C. NO. 2004-04-004

WHEREAS, Executive Order (E.O.) No. 68, series of 2002 entitled "Designing the Department of Energy (DOE) as the Lead Agency in Developing the Philippine Natural Gas Industry", mandates the DOE to ensure a unified and coordinated effort towards establishing a successful and robust natural gas industry;

WHEREAS, Her Excellency, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo launched the Natural Gas Vehicle Program for Public Transport (NGVPPT) on October 16, 2002 that aims to enhance the energy supply security in the transport sector through fuel diversification using indigenous natural gas and to use natural gas as a clean alternative fuel for transport, and at the same time unveiled a portfolio of incentives to encourage private sector participation to provide the necessary support, logistics and infrastructure;

WHEREAS, Executive Order No. 164, series of 2003 entitled "Modifying the Nomenclature and the Rates of Import Duty on Various Products under Section 104 of the Tariff and Customs Code of 1978 (Presidential Decree No. 1464, as amended)", reduces the rates of duty for NGV industry-related equipment, parts and components to encourage active private sector participation;

WHEREAS, Executive Order No. 290 entitled "Implementing the NGVPPT" was approved and signed on February 24, 2004 to ensure effective implementation of the program;

WHEREAS, to enable the DOE to effectively implement E.O. No. 290 and E.O. No. 164 and successfully pursue the overall execution plan of the NGVPPT, it issued and promulgated Department Circular No. 2004-04-004 which prescribed the Guidelines on the issuance of certificate of accreditation and certificate of authority to import under the NGVPPT;

WHEREAS, Executive Order No. 396, series of 2004, further reduces the rates of duty from 1% to 0% for NGV Industry-related equipment, parts and components to encourage active private sector participation;

WHEREAS, Section 4 of the said Executive Order mandates the DOE, in coordination with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and the Bureau of Customs (BOC) to promulgate the implementing rules and regulations that will govern the implementation of this Executive Order;

WHEREAS, in a meeting held on March 8, 2005 and attended by representatives of the DOE, NEDA, BOC and DTI through the Board of Investments, it was agreed upon that D.C. No. 2004-04-004 be adopted as the IRR of E.O. No. 396 and certain provisions thereof be amended;

WHEREAS, Department Circular No. DC2005-07-006, series of 2005, was issued to set the policy direction to guide all stakeholders particularly as regards to securing access to the supply of indigenous natural gas and establishment of CNG distribution infrastructure;

WHEREAS, after several meetings of the Technical Working Group attended under the D.C. No. 2005-07-006, it was agreed upon that D.C. No. 2004-04-004 be adopted as the IRR of D.C. No. 2005-07-006 and certain provisions thereof be amended;

WHEREAS, Executive Order No. 488, series of 2006, modifies the import duty on components, parts and accessories for the assembly of hybrid, electric, flexible fuel and compressed natural gas (CNG) motor vehicles to provide opportunity for the manufacture and assembly of the emerging alternative fuel vehicle technology;

WHEREAS, in a meeting called by BOC on February 2, 2006 which was attended by representatives from the DOE and industry players including car manufacturers for the drafting of the guidelines for E.O. 488, it was agreed upon that registration and issuance of Certificate of Authority to Import for Category I: Manufacture and Assembly of CNG motor vehicles under D.C. 2004-04-004 shall be transferred to BOC's Motor Vehicle Development Program;

NOW THEREFORE, the DOE in coordination with the DTI through BOC, NEDA, BOC and concerned industry players hereby adopts DOE Circular No. D.C. 2004-04-004 as the IRR of E.O. 396, E.O. 488 and D.C. 2005-07-006 and likewise promulgates the following rules and regulations/ amendments to certain provisions of D.C. No. 2004-04-004:

SECTION 1. Section 1(b & d), Rule I are hereby amended to read as follows:

RULE I

GUIDELINES ON THE ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATE OF ACCREDITATION

"Section 1. Requirements.

xxx xxx xxx

b) Any natural or juridical person, organized under Philippine laws that will engage in any NGV industry-related businesses including CNG refueling station and transport operation; NGV operation; NGV and related parts/components manufacture and assembly; NGV no power/retrofit/conversion including repair and maintenance; and related activities such as research and development (R&D) activities and operation of NGVs as shuttle service.

d) "Qualified participants may be categorized under any of the following groups:

"Category I - Manufacture/Assembly of NGVs

▪ Engaged in the establishment of new assembly facilities or utilization of an existing assembly facility for the assembly/manufacturer of brand new quality NGVs registered under the BOC's Motor Vehicle Development Program

"Category II - Operation of NGVs

▪ Engaged in the operation of NGVs in accordance with relevant Philippine National Standards (PNS) and procedures including the provision of warranties to NGV owners/operators

"Category III - Re-powering/Retrofitting/Conversion of NGVs

▪ Engaged in the re-power, retrofit, conversion, repair and maintenance of NGVs in accordance with relevant Philippine National Standards (PNS) and procedures including the provision of warranties to NGV owners/operators

"Category IV - CNG Refueling Station/Transport Operation

▪ Engaged in the design, construction, installation and operation of CNG refueling station/s and related infrastructures and facilities including hauling/transport of CNG in accordance with relevant PNS standards and procedures

"Category V - Others

▪ Engaged in research and development (R&D) activities and operation of NGVs as shuttle service by government entities as approved by the DOE."

SECTION 2. Section 1(e) is hereby amended to read as follows:

e) As their commitment under the NGVPPT, each participant, over a period of one (1) year from the date of issuance of their CA, shall invest and/or bring in investments in any NGV industry-related businesses. The minimum investment requirements are as follows:

"Category I (Manufacture and assembly) (MVDP) : US\$0.40 million

"Category II (Operation) : US\$0.20 million

"Category III (Re-powering/Retrofit/Conversion) : US\$0.50 million

"Category IV (Refueling station) : To be determined by the DOE"

Note: The minimum investment requirements shall be recomputed every five (5) years to validate the viability of the figures to the prevailing conditions.

"Proof of investments in the NGV industry-related businesses shall be in accordance with the commitments submitted to the DOE. Such proof may include an update report on the undertakings from the date of accreditation and accompanied by certified photocopies of documents relative to the undertakings. The DOE may automatically cancel the CA after the Committee finds each participant to be non-compliant with its commitment, subject to the imposition of the following penalties payable to the pertinent government agency involved: (a) payment of duty differential on all importations; and (b) payment of other incentives provided under the program."

xxx xxx xxx

SECTION 3. Section 2(b-f), Rule I are hereby amended to read as follows:

"Section 2. Procedures.

xxx xxx xxx

b) The DOE-EUMB shall only receive and record duly accomplished application forms with complete requirements as stated in the checklists (Annexes 2 and 3). A non-refundable processing fee of Php 5,000.00 shall be charged to the proponent/applicant upon filing of each application.

c) The DOE-EUMB shall review and evaluate the application submitted by the proponent/applicant and recommend appropriate action on the application. The evaluation of the applicant's business proposal and/or feasibility study shall be based on, but not be limited to the following

- Viability of the project;
- Impact on the industry and economy as a whole; and
- Impact on the NGVPPT

d) Upon EUMB recommendation, the DOE NGVPPT Committee created under D.C. 2005-07-006 shall decide on each application. If found meritorious, the Committee will recommend to the Undersecretary the approval of the application.

e) Applicants with approved application shall be issued a Certificate of Accreditation (CA) signed by the DOE Undersecretary, with clearance and authority from the DOE Secretary, and shall comply with terms and conditions specified therein (Annex 1). The CA shall be valid for two (2) years from the date of issuance and shall be renewed every two (2) years subject to regular procedure.

f) The original CA shall be claimed from the Office of the Director, Energy Utilization Management Bureau (EUMB), Energy Center, Meriti Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig.

SECTION 4. A new provision to be known as Section 1 is incorporated under Rule 2 which reads as follows:

RULE II

GUIDELINES ON THE ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY TO IMPORT (CA) NATURAL GAS VEHICLES (CBU, CKD AND KD), COMPRESSED NATURAL GAS (CNG) REFUELING SYSTEMS, NGV CONVERSION/RETROFIT SYSTEMS, RELATED INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES, PARTS AND COMPONENTS

"Section 1. Coverage.

"The program shall cover the importation of NGV-CNG industry related equipment, parts and components by qualified participants to the NGVPPT at zero duty within the seven-year pilot phase period in accordance with the schedule provided under Annex A of E.O. 396. However, importation of CBU-CNG buses at zero duty is limited to the first 200 units for the Pilot CNG Project."

SECTION 5. Section 1, Rule 11 is hereby renumbered as Section 2, Rule 11 and Section 2(c) thereof is hereby amended to read as follows:

"Section 2. Requirements.

xxx xxx xxx

c) All applicants complying with the requirements under Section 1(a) hereof shall submit a duly accomplished application form signed by himself or a duly authorized representative, as the case may be, and duly verified together with the following documents for proper evaluation:

- Pro forma invoice;
- Detailed list of items to be imported;
- Liquidation Report (if applicable, to be submitted within one (1) month from end of each quarter duly signed by the company's authorized representative and duly verified);
- Authenticated Certificate of Compliance with relevant Philippine National Standards and procedures to be submitted prior to the shipment of units from the country of origin."

xxx xxx xxx

SECTION 6. Section 2 is hereby renumbered as Section 3, Rule 11 and Section 2(h) thereof is hereby amended to read as follows:

"Section 3. Procedures.

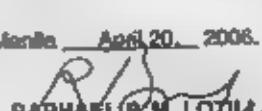
"a) Issuance of CA:

"i. The CA shall be addressed and released to the NGVPPT participants/importer by the DOE-EUMB. All NGVPPT importations shall be processed by the BOC only on the basis of an original CA. The BOC shall record all importations processed against the CA running balance on utilization at the back of said CA. The DOE-EUMB shall provide the BOC and the BOT a list of CA's issued on a monthly basis for their reference and information. The BOC shall provide the DOE-EUMB and BOC records of importations processed for reference and monitoring purposes."

SECTION 7. The pertinent provisions of Department Circular No. 2004-04-004 not otherwise affected by the above amendments shall remain in force and in effect.

SECTION 8. This Department Circular shall take effect immediately upon its publication in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation and submission of three (3) certified copies thereof to the University of the Philippines Law Center.

Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, Metro Manila April 20, 2006.


RAPHAEL R. M. LOTILLA
Secretary

GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR THE NGVPPT ACCREDITATION

Annex 1

1. Applicants for NGVPPT accreditation shall fully observe and abide by the provisions of the Natural Gas Vehicle Program for Public Transport (NGVPPT) and its implementing guidelines as well as the commitments and representations made in the application for accreditation. Applicants shall further take adequate measures to ensure that its obligations therein are faithfully discharged.
2. Participants shall fully comply with the directives and instructions issued by the DOE from time to time in pursuance of its authority under E.O. 68, E.O. 290, E.O. 396 and D.C. 2005-07-006.
3. The CA is non-transferable and participants to the Program shall not transfer and/or assign to any person, partnership, corporation or other entity without the written approval of the DOE.
4. The participant shall allow duly authorized representatives of the DOE to inspect its assembly facilities, manufacturing facilities, refueling stations and other NGV industry related operation/facilities and examine pertinent books of account, records and documents in order to ascertain compliance with the provision of the NGVPPT guidelines, the Supplemental Guidelines to the Program, its commitments and representations, as well as the general and specific terms and conditions of its accreditation.
5. The participant shall not make any changes or deviate from the business plan submitted in connection with its application for accreditation as a participant in Program without prior written DOE approval.
6. The participant's facilities, products and services related to the Program shall be subjected to safety tests in accordance with the duly approved standards and/or whenever the DOE so requires.
7. The participant shall be responsible for all expenses that may be incurred in the testing and certification of its facilities, products and services for purposes of meeting the safety and products standard of the natural gas vehicle industry. The DOE, at its sole option, may require that appropriate tests be conducted in acceptable laboratories, located in the country and/or abroad.
8. The participant shall notify the DOE of any adjustments or increase in the retail prices of its products and services two (2) weeks before implementation.
9. The participant shall ensure that the consumers are well informed of the retail prices of its products and services. It shall endeavor to make its authorized dealers observe sound business practices and refrain from any illegal trading activities.
10. The participant shall exert efforts to be properly represented in all meetings that shall be called in connection with the implementation of the NGVPPT Guidelines.
11. The participant shall submit the following reports to the DOE-EUMB in accordance with the following schedule:

- a. Quarterly reports which must be submitted one (1) month after the end of each calendar quarter.

1. Accomplishment Report;

2. Monthly Production and Sales Report (if applicable);

3. Quarterly schedule of manufacturing cost per model (if applicable);

4. Quarterly export earnings (if applicable).

b. Annual reports which must be submitted one (1) month after the end of each calendar year

b. Itemized prices upon the introduction of a new model or change in FOB prices.

Note: These reports must be submitted using the prescribed forms.

Annex 2-A

APPLICATION FOR NGVPPT ACCREDITATION "Category I - Manufacture & Assembly of NGVs" Checklist Guide

I. Check completeness of documents (3 sets)

- Duty accomplished application form
- MVDP Certificate of Registration
- Business proposal/feasibility study
- Board Resolution authorizing official representative to sign in behalf of the applicant enterprise, if applicable
- Other relevant documents required by the DOE

II. Check correctness of application

- Check if application is duly signed by authorized representative and notarized
- Validate the authenticity of permits and other documents
- Validate the authenticity of the technical licensing agreement with the supplier
- Evaluate the business proposal/feasibility study

Annex 2-B

APPLICATION FOR NGVPPT ACCREDITATION "Category II - Operation" Checklist Guide

I. Check completeness of documents (3 sets)

- Duty accomplished application form
- Duty accomplished project outline form
- Business name and brand name
- Business proposal/feasibility study
- Business permits (DTI, SEC registration, Mayor's Permit, others)
- Income Tax Return from the last three (3) years (or other proof of financial capability, if newly established company)
- Technical Licensing Agreement/Technical Certification (or other proof of technical capability)
- Pictures of terminals, if applicable
- Bank Certification, if applicable
- Board Resolution authorizing official representative to sign in behalf of the applicant enterprise, if applicable
- Other relevant documents required by the DOE

II. Check correctness of application

- Check if application is duly signed by authorized representative and notarized
- Validate the authenticity of permits and other documents
- Validate the authenticity of the technical licensing agreement with the supplier
- Evaluate the business proposal/feasibility study

Annex 2-C

APPLICATION FOR NGVPPT ACCREDITATION "Category III - Re-powering/Retrofit/Conversion" Checklist Guide

I. Check completeness of documents (3 sets)

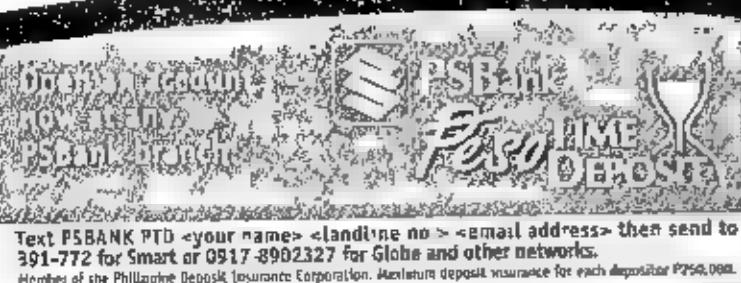
- Duty accomplished application form
- Duty accomplished project outline form
- Business name and brand name
- Business proposal/feasibility study
- Business permits (DTI, SEC registration, Mayor's Permit, others)
- Income Tax Return from

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Cut in oil import tariff seen

By Abigail L. Ho

THE GOVERNMENT'S PLAN TO CUT THE tariff on oil imports will likely breeze through Tariff Commission deliberations and become an executive order before Congress resumes its session on May 15.

This was because the proposal did not meet any opposition during yesterday's hearing at the Tariff Commission, said Zenaida Monsada, director of the Department of Energy oil industry management bureau.

"Most likely, the EO will be issued before Congress resumes its session on the 15th. Then the mechanics for the implementation will be formulated by the DOE," (Department of Energy)

and the National Economic and Development Authority," she said in a briefing.

Like what Finance Secretary Margarito Teves had earlier said, Monsada said the implementation of the tariff reduction would follow the "sliding scale" method, which meant that the current 3-percent tariff would go down by 1 percentage point when world oil prices hit a certain level, and by another percentage point when prices go even higher.

She said the tariff could even go down to zero, if necessary.

"Those will be in the mechanics, which will come out shortly after the EO. We just have to consider several different scenarios when we formulate those guidelines," she said.

Apart from determining the triggers for each percentage-point drop in the import tariff, she said the DOE, DOF and Neda would also have to consider whether to do a blanket implementation for crude and all types of refined petroleum products or to go for a "focused" implementation.

Focused implementation would mean implementing the reduction for products used by the public transport sector, particularly diesel, she said.

The impact of the tariff reduction on pump prices would also depend on which products would be covered by the tariff cut, she added.

"The target is to maximize the benefit to public transport," she said.

NTC clamps down on 'text spam'

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS Commission yesterday clamped down on commercial text messages being broadcast over cellular phone networks in response to mounting complaints from the public.

In a circular, the NTC ordered mobile phone firms' content providers to register with the regulator before being allowed to send so-called "text spam" messages.

NTC, in turn, shall provide the telecommunications firms and the Department of Trade and Industry with a list of content providers authorized to broadcast text spam.

At the same time, NTC ordered all telecommunications firms and their content providers to first register their promos with the DTI before offering them to the public.

Earlier, NTC Commissioner Ronald O. Solis said complaints lodged with regulators against unwanted spam text messages numbered "in the hundreds."

Some users complain about the inconvenience of receiving unsolicited messages and some complain that they are billed by their cellular phone operators for services without their consent.

Cellular phone firms deny billing clients for these spam messages, although persistent complaints have prompted the NTC to further tighten existing guidelines governing commercial text message broadcasts.

In response to these complaints, NTC also ordered networks to send out broadcast messages only once and free of charge.

NTC also clamped down on broadcast messages sent even to subscribers who have agreed to receive them, mandating that such messages should not be sent to clients from 9 p.m. to 7 a.m.

This is in response to some complaints from subscribers that text spam messages are often sent in the dead of night, often disturbing their rest.

The new memorandum also orders the creation of a "cleaning house" that will monitor the sending of all such messages, although it failed to detail how the system will operate.

Chinese firm eyes hybrid corn project

By Ronnel W. Domingo

A CHINESE GROUP IS LOOKING AT A PROJECT that involves planting a million hectares of land with hybrid corn for export to China, according to the Philippine Exporters Confederation.

Ortiz-Luis Jr said the plan was just one of many ventures that provide opportunities for local farmers.

Ortiz-Luis did not give further details on the Chinese project but said the trend in agri-business was for farmers to partner with big food processors like San Miguel Foods and Vitarich that are searching for contract growing partners.

Another option was to go into agri-forestry amid a shortage in supply of furniture-grade plantation timber for the furniture industry.

In a speech delivered during the 56th graduation rites at the Central Luzon State University, the center of agriculture and fisheries education in Nueva Ecija, Ortiz-Luis called on new graduates to put up businesses and help boost the sector's output growth.

"Unless and until the farming sector gets modernized and its productivity increased, the Philippines will remain a third world country in a neighborhood of economic dragons," he said.

Ortiz-Luis, who is also chair of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said the farm sector grew only at an average of 2.8 percent a year from 1994 to 2004 or barely faster than the country's population growth.

He said that the sector failed to progress because those engaged in agriculture treated farming only as a source of subsistence, not as a business enterprise.

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GREEN salad
by former Diamond
Hotel chef
Raimund Braun

The perfect green salad

DO WE ALL JUST LOVE A good salad? But have we ever gone out of our way to know what a salad is? Or have we truly enjoyed it the way we should? How does one make the Perfect Green Salad?

"A salad is a food item generally served either before or after the main dish as a separate course, as a main course in itself, or as a side dish accompanying the main dish. The word 'salad' comes from the French *salade* of the same meaning, from the Latin *salata*, 'salty' from *sal*, 'salt.' It also refers to a blended food item—often meat, seafood or eggs blended with mayonnaise, finely chopped vegetables and seasonings—which can be served as part of a green salad, but is often used as a sandwich filling."

There are various types of salads but today let's focus on the green salad.

Tips for the PGS

I was fortunate to have had the opportunity to spend time with two Michelin star chefs in Singapore. I asked them their thoughts on what a salad should be and what makes the perfect salad...

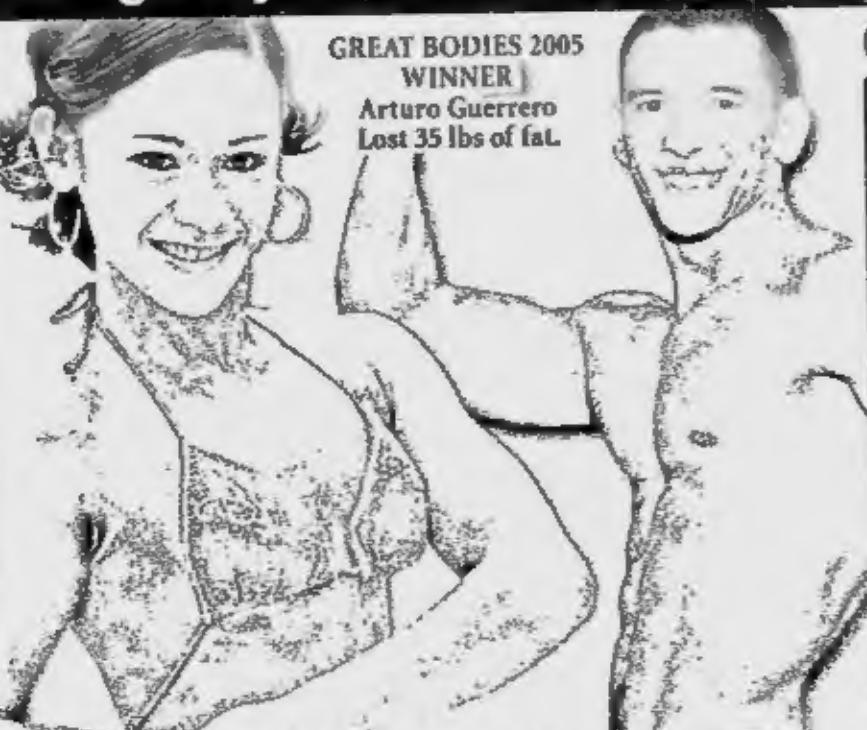
Chef Kevin Thornton says: "The art of making salad is simple. Everything must be fresh! I use greens, whatever is in season. The difference is that, unlike you guys, we have seasons and that allows us to make use of various ingredients and change them as the seasons change. That way I know that the produce is at its prime. My dream is to have my own garden where I could pick everything off just before service. And my favorite dressing is a simple one made of garlic, olive oil, basil, parmesan cheese, salt and pepper. All these are blended and emulsified."

Chef Philippe Legendre adds: "I like picking my own salad greens. I like using the wild ones. It is always about high- and good-quality products—only the freshest will do. I do not like many kinds put together or a salad of many ingredients. I like mine to be just of one kind, freshly picked and drizzled with no more than a good olive oil, just that! Or with a little salt and pepper and sometimes, vinegar. Then, I get to enjoy the greens."

To sum up, a good salad is quite simple to achieve. It must comprise of the freshest greens and the best olive oil. It is about discovering the vegetables and not masking them with such intense flavors from the dressing. And a good salad should be coated in dressing and not swimming in it!

It may not be as easy for us to get freshly picked greens, but not impossible, as I have seen potted lettuce plants in the supermarket. The next best thing is to go for the many types of lettuce readily available. There are even Salad Time packs of mixed greens that are

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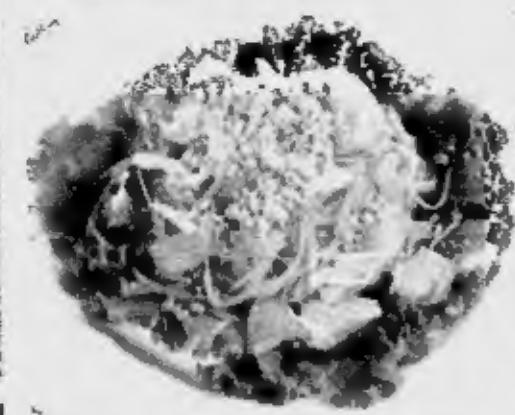
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ANTONIO'S mixed green salad with fruits and nuts

Where do chefs and foodies like to get their green leaves of summer? Read on



THIEN Dong's Vietnamese Pomelo and Shrimp Salad



A GLASS of light salad from Edsa Shangri-La's Heat



REFRESHING array of salads from Makati Shangri-La's Circles

Salad days

By Vangie Baga-Reyes

IF YOU HAVE A CRAVING FOR salad, if you're dreaming of a mountain of fresh, crisp greens drizzled with tangy dressing and topped with sweet-peppery croutons and creamy shavings of cheese, where do you go?

We asked certified foodies, restaurateurs, chefs and true-blue salad eaters where they get their "green fix." Here's what they told us.

Johnlu Koa

Baking expert and French Baker owner

"I head for Shangri-La Makati's Circles or

People who run around Metro Manila trying to catch half-day weekend markets can now have two days to do their shopping and in just one place

Edsa Shangri-La's Heat and go straight to the salad bar. I like Romaine lettuce, arugula, endive and iceberg, and my favorite dressings are Caesar, honey mustard and honey balsamic."

Eugene Raymundo

Chef and food stylist

"I go to Italiani's for its salads. I just love their hefty serving of fresh greens with Caesar dressing plus the chicken fillet that goes well with everything on the plate. My perfect dinner on a night out!

"I usually make my own salad at home with greens and fruits, either dried or fresh, a splash of olive oil and balsamic as my all-time favorite. I also make wasabi vinaigrette with

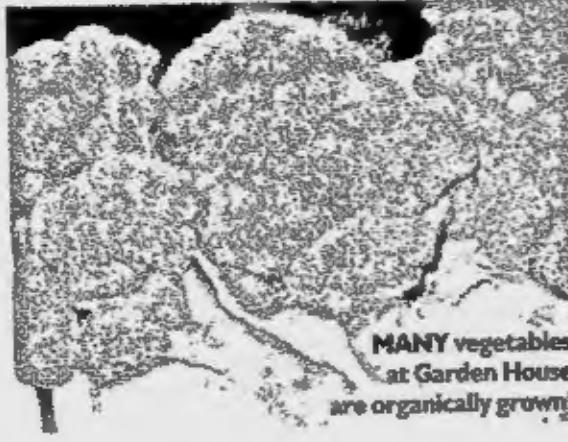
mango and kani."

Malu Gamboa

Food expert and restaurateur

"Tsukiji's Kaiso (Seaweed) salad, People's Palace's Pomelo Salad, Antonio's mixed green salad with herbs, parmesan and raspberry vinaigrette, Cirkulo's Caesar and Insalata di Gorgonzola. These places serve their salads and dressings cold, which makes all the difference. Their greens and fruits are fresh and crisp, and the dressing never drowns the greens."

"I am a fan of Caesar salads and have fond memories of Mario's in Baguio when I was little... They made iceberg lettuce delicious! Today, I usually order mixed greens with vinaigrette."



MANY vegetables at Garden House are organically grown



THE "MOVEABLE" fresh produce tiangge settles down at Garden House.

Text and photos by Linda B. Bolido

ASPARAGUS SPEARS FROM POLO-molok, South Cotabato, plump tomatoes from Batangas and organically grown lettuce from Tagaytay—these are just some of the things on offer at the new Edsa Garden House, described as a "flower and agricultural growers' flea market."

People who spend weekends just trying to catch half-day produce tiangges held in different parts of Metro Manila will be pleased to know that now they have all of two days to shop for some hard-to-find food stuff and organically grown agricultural products.

Unlike in supermarkets and even wet markets, the vendors are often the growers themselves, eliminating the middleperson that usually accounts for higher prices.

And these small producers often have surprises in store for customers. As devotees of weekend tiangges know, you can count on finding a few bunches of freshly picked pako and some other greens you probably have not heard of before, paho (small green mangoes that some people swear are better for salad

than the big ones), newly harvested seaweeds and even the now rare rimas (although it is not really salad material).

Located at the Manila Seedling Bank, on the Edsa side, near the corner of Quezon Avenue, the 5,000-sq m shop was set up by Adela Ang to help promote Filipino products. It provides small-scale producers, recreational farmers, hobbyists and others, who move around the different tiangge venues, a regular weekend space for selling their products should they so wish.

As the name suggests, Edsa Garden House's business for seven days a week will be plants, fresh flowers and garden supplies and accessories. But on Saturdays and Sundays, the parking area will be given over to small- and medium-scale producers who are expected to bring, aside from fresh vegetables and fruits, fish, meat products and regional Filipino delicacies.

Among the first to set up stalls in the market are several organic vegetable producers, including the Organic Producers Trade Association cooperative, Ikapati, Back to Basic, Gourmet Farm and Earthworm Sanctuary.

Two or three bakeries which eschew preservatives and other chemicals have also set up shop, as well as a lawyer who is a pet-shop owner on the side.

Aside from giving small producers a venue for selling their products, the Edsa Garden

House also organizes lectures and workshops for those who would like to learn about gardening and farming either for livelihood or recreation.

The Edsa Garden House will be formally opened on May 12.

FILIPINOS HAVE TO mode if we are asked a separate course.

Why? Because we serve that means everything or once told me that when mom's (Nora V. Daza) A Paris, the code word wasing, all courses served at the dessert, of course, served after the meal.

For Filipinos, salad does not come with the meal. The favorite being canned fruit dressing. Then there are noise dressing such as Russian salad with the red onion bits, and coleslaw, among their way into fiesta buffets.

Side dish

The everyday salad is a dish, something that goes with the meal. The salad usually consists of cucumbers, pako and soyote sprouts, the basic Filipino vinaigrette, water, salt, pepper and some pickled vegetables are so salads because they provide a good source of fiber.

A long time ago, if you were always iceberg lettuce, available lettuce, grower's dressing was Thousand Islands dressing, catsup. There's a minded waitress who called it "natural wonder in Pangasinan dressing," it is using sandwich spread mayonnaise and pickle relish.

When romaine, the crisp salad became available, it was the crunch and succulent lettuce.

Baguio provided the mate needed to grow with the indigenous Filipino green Tagaytay that started the ad revolution. And, part was the late Old Kano (Amann) who showed the route to Filipinos.

Pioneer

Old Kano was a pioneer in growing not only different kinds of lettuces but also in his farm. He had been an expatriate chef who worked in hotel kitchens. Werner L. of Sant's Deli remembers Kano delivering his herbs to the Yakal Street Makati in 1984 on a Land Italian scooter. Sant's outlet for Old Kano's produce, the ordinary consumer to herbs or lettuce from the

Old Kano would point out that this is for chet so all those vegetables himself the chefs was he would be rotting in the refrigerator.

The perfect green salad

ready to be tossed.

Remember that by the look of the vegetable alone, you can tell if it is fresh. The leaves must be upright and the stems still firm and "crisp" to the touch.

Once you get home, wash the greens in a bowl filled with cold water, carefully handling them by the stem base, running them through the water bowl gently to avoid bruising the leaves. Remove any discolored portions of the leaves and prepare according to how you wish to serve them.

It is important to completely dry the greens to avoid diluting the dressing, thus ruining the salad. The leaves should then be kept in a zipper bag in the refrigerator until the greens are ready to be tossed and served.

Oil is a vital ingredient in salad making. Different oils may be used to attain different flavors. However, olive oil is the most formidable of salad oils. If you are to serve salads with just oil and vinegar, make sure that the olive oil you use is the best you can possibly find.

Let's talk about vinegar. A good rule for this is use your vinegar of choice. There are many flavored ones in the market specifically for salads. Just remember to use vinegar with an acidity level of five to six percent. If it's too strong, it overpowers the greens. If you must, lessen the quantity.

French toss

In a salad bowl, pour the dressing. Using the "serving" salad spoon and fork, make an "X"

and let the utensils sit in the bowl. Just before serving, drop the greens and toss. The best gets upper portion of the salad (least dressed), the bottom leaves go to the guest (perfectly dressed). Tossing the greens must be done only before serving! You would not like a soggy salad.

Pinoy dressings

I have featured salads and salad dressings time and again in KR. So today, let's do dressings with a Pinoy twist.

Mango Dressing:

$\frac{1}{4}$ c mango or guava jam
3 tbsp vinegar
 $\frac{1}{4}$ c olive or vegetable oil
Salt and pepper, to taste

Whisk jam, vinegar. Add oil in a fine stream. Season to taste.

Muscovado Dressing:

3 tbsp olive or vegetable oil
2 tsp garlic
 $\frac{1}{3}$ c rice vinegar
2 tbsp fresh lime juice
 $\frac{1}{4}$ c muscovado sugar
1 tbsp chili garlic oil

Whisk ingredients together. Season to taste.

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E-mail the author at raspiras@inquirer.com.ph.



grette, with granny smith apples or mandarin oranges, crisp cucumber, ripe tomatoes, walnuts or crunchy croutons. Another favorite is arugula with buffalo mozzarella, basil, tomatoes, olive oil.

"Whenever I make my own salads and don't opt for my brother J's fab sherry vinaigrette, I go for Japanese dressings like Wafu and Goma at Sakura on Pasay Road. Blue Kitchen's Vietnamese Lime Salad dressing is a winner."

Robert Castaneda

Foodie and restaurateur

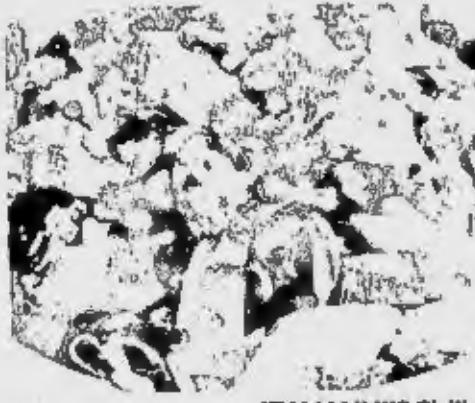
"I go to Italiani's for its huge servings of salads. Very filling. I also visit Sonia's Garden because their veggies are clean and freshly picked. I love veggies with fruits, and when I make my own salad I use raspberry vinaigrette."

Joanne Limoanco

Sous chef Dusit Hotel

"I enjoy Vietnamese Pomelo and Shrimp Salad from Thien Dong because it's just so re-

MAKE-YOUR-OWN-SALAD at Hotel Philippine Plaza's Spiral



ITALIANI'S Sicilian Chicken Salad



CIRKULO'S Insalata di Gorgonzola

freshing and almost guilt free. I love salads that combine fruits with fresh greens. I love making my own Caesar dressing because I like it with more anchovies than the usual."

Nancy Reyes-Lumen

Chef and Cook magazine editor

"Daiyon salad of Sakura Yakiniku on Pasay Road is the best. Also exceptional are Italiani's for big servings of Caesar and Uva, which has a nice 'chop chop' salad. I also go to buffets with big salad bars like Mandarin, Philipine Plaza and Shangri-la."

"For Pinoy salad, it's best to make your own with macopa, kesong puti, ripe mango, tomatoes and basil and lime leaves. Dressing for me is vinaigrette, but when I want to indulge, I make sour cream and adobo powder dressing and add parmesan. *Merong masarap sa akin*, boiled beetroot and cucumber and celery and yakon with Asian dressing. *Tulap-tulap*!"

Happy Ongpauco

Sake Lab owner

"Lolo Dad's Lobster and Foie Gras Salad and Hawaiian Barbecue's Grilled Chicken with pomelo, grapes, orange slices and avocado chunks on a bed of salad greens with raspberry vinaigrette sprinkled with roasted almonds."

"If I make my own salad, I make different fruit-flavored vinaigrette dressings. It's sweet, flavorful and tasty, at the same time low in calories."

Jacqueline Alleje

Restaurateur and organic believer

"I'd like to go to places where lettuce and salad herbs are organically grown. Some hotels do get organic lettuce, but not regularly. For lacto-ovo vegetarian, the Ricotta-orange salad of La Trattoria Gourmet in Shangri-La Plaza Mall is a good choice since it is a source of fresh salad greens, proteins and a straightforward, well-seasoned vinaigrette..."

"I love lots of freshly picked culinary herbs on my salads. Sometimes I make a herb cocktail with Italian flat parsley, coriander, basil, dill and mix them with a vinaigrette or an oil-free salad dressing. I use fruits only sparingly in salads, but they can be excellent matches."

E-mail the author at vbaga@inquirer.com.ph

Redefining the salad, Filipino-style

GO INTO WESTERN mode to do and eat salad as

our food family style. Sandy Daza Filipinos dined at his lux ile Philippines in "sabay bagsak," meaning the same time. Save for sweets will always be

snacks only mean vegetable fruit salads, our faves with a heavy cream those that use mayonnaise with chicken, beans, potato with bacon others. Those find

not a course but a side dish with other viands. of plants that grow better, fiddlehead fern or The usual dressing is a mix of vinegar, some sugar. Maybe that's why sometimes considered as the same sour country simply grilled items. These were used, like iceberg was the onion in Baguio. Preferred and, mayo with pickle spoke about an absent-minded the dressing "hungrily confused it with the man. Not only was the salad also reformulated because it combined fish.

choice green for Caesar salad snobs grew to suddenly hoi polloi ice-temperate climate is not important. But it was green-salad-ularly, it (Fred) salad

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C4 LIFESTYLE

Thai guest chef presents signature dishes

THE PENINSULA MANILA'S Spices is holding a Thai food festival on May 6-20. Guest chef Sumalee Boonek of the Peninsula Bangkok's Tiplara Thai restaurant will be recreating her own signature dishes such as Gai Yang Ta-Krai (barbecued-marinated chicken with lemongrass and sweet and sour sauce), Choo Chee Pla-Ka-Phong (sea bass with red curry cream sauce) and Yum Som-O Goong Phao (grilled prawn salad with pomelo). Call 8872888.

MANDARIN ORIENTAL Manila's DINING OUT

Tin Hau is featuring Old Style Cantonese until May 14. Ingredients purchased and prepared on the same day are cooked just before serving and are presented in an à la carte menu. Dishes include Braised Abalone with Sea Cucumber, Duck Feet and Green Vegetables; Oven-baked Eel Fillet with Honey Sauce; Stir-fried Mian Xian with Slipper Lobster; Charcoal-roasted Honey Pork Coin with Sesame Seed; Braised Fish Lips, Dried Scallops and Mushroom Soup topped with quail egg; Imperial Chicken; and Baked Pork Spare Ribs with fermented bean curd. Available daily for lunch and dinner. Call 7508888.

ITALIANNI'S chef Junjun de Ocampo has come up with a new selection of dishes, including Prosciutto and Provolone Crostini, traditional Italian ham served with toasted Tuscan bread topped with tomatoes and crowned with creamy provolone cheese with sweet cantaloupe and grapes on the side; Parmesan Crusted Fish Fillet, white fish breaded with parmesan crusts and topped with white wine cream caper sauce and served with shoestring potato pancake and mixed vegetables; Roasted Garlic Shrimp, a variation of the classic spicy gambas best eaten with garlic bread. Seafood lovers

can try the Crispy Crab Cakes with Mango Salsa, crab and salmon patties served with mango salsa and honey mustard sauce. Available in all Italiani's restaurants located at Greenbelt 2 and Glorietta 4, Makati; Alabang Town Center; Greenhills, San Juan; Eastwood, Libis, Gateway Mall, Araneta Center, and Tomas Morato, QC; and SM Megamall. A new branch opens at SM Mall of Asia this month.

MANILA PAVILION'S Rotisserie presents Antipasto Bar. The antipasto lineup includes Par-

ma Ham and Melon, Buffalo Mozzarella and Tomatoes in Basil Oil, Seared Tuna Romana, Liver Paté with Crostini, Prawns and Eggplant Bruschetta, Venitienne Salad with Black Olives, Smoked Salmon and Onion Marmalade, and Mixed Greens with Condiments and Dressing. Available until April 29, Mondays through Fridays, lunch and dinner and Saturdays for dinner only, priced at P650+ per person. Call 5261212 local 2505.

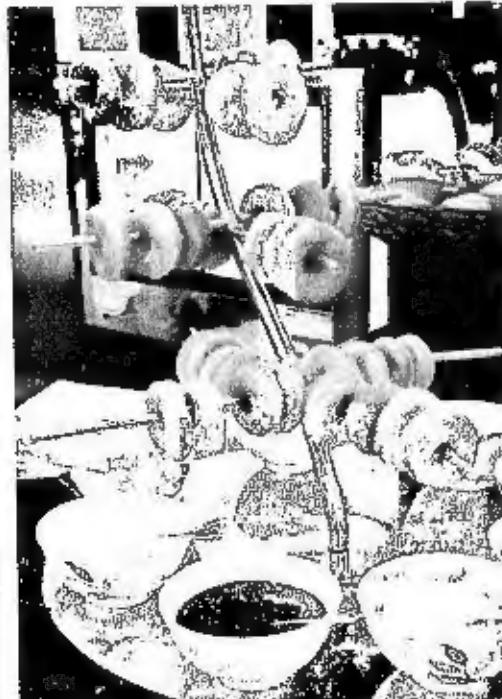
M CAFÉ offers desserts in servings big enough for two people, including Mango Stick Rice, the unique combination of the native kakanin and mango. New concoctions are the Caramelized Banana Tart, Brazo de Limón, and the Gratinated Guimaras Mango, among others. An assortment of Asian sorbet and gelato are also available like the Guava Guyabano Sorbet and the Pastillas Gelato. The health-conscious can enjoy the Sugar-free Barako Mousse and Green Tea Gelato. Call 7573000 or 7576000.

HOTEL PHILIPPINE PLAZA'S Spiral restaurant has the Never Again promo until tomorrow, May 5. Every group of six partaking of the Spiral lunch



CHILI'S GRILL and Bar has a new salad for the health-conscious—the Lettuce Wraps, grilled Asian-spiced chicken with carrots, water chestnuts and almonds wrapped in a piece of lettuce and dipped in either a seasoned ginger or peanut sauce. Chili's branches are located at Greenbelt 1, Ayala Center, Makati City (8120225); Northeast Greenhills in San Juan (7272959) or Tomas Morato Avenue, QC (3725017).

or dinner buffet will get one voucher for a complimentary jet lag massage, two complimentary aqua golf vouchers, three complimentary drinks for the Poolside Barbecue dinner, four poolview upgrade vouchers and five raffle coupons for a chance to stay in the Imperial Suite. Call 5515555 local 1086 and mention the Never Again promo when making reservations.



MANILA PAVILION Hotel's newly opened Seasons restaurant features different stations, which are further divided into corners. The hot station has the pizza, paella, barbecue, pasta, carving and rotisserie corners. The cold station offers bread and cheese, salads, Italian antipasto, Chinese and Japanese appetizers, and shellfish corners. Three kinds of soup (Filipino, Chinese and international) are at the soup and dim sum station. Donut, creative cakes, ice cream and halo-halo, waffle and crepe, and native desserts corners are at the pastry station. Seasons at Manila Pavilion is open 6 a.m.-12 midnight daily. Call 5261212 local 2318.

Cooking demo at the mall

LEARN EASY, DELICIOUS AND practical recipes for the hottest season of the year.

Join "Mobile Kusina" at the mall, a free cooking demonstration, 1-4 p.m., May 7 at the Atrium of SM Baguio. Get cooking tips and learn techniques from chef Morella Gala of Khaldi's Café, with Mobile Kusina chefs.

Simply bring three empty wrappers of Magnolia Quickmelt, Dari Creme, Monterey, Magnolia Chicken, Purefoods Supremo Vinegar, Magnolia Nutri Oil and/or Purefoods TJ Hotdogs at the venue. My Great Food Club members are encouraged to attend. Call 6719876 local 402, 404 and 405.



CAKES FOR ALL OCCASIONS
Make a special event truly memorable with a one-of-a-kind cake from Cake Avenue, 78 Estrella St., Bel-Air, Makati City. Call 8952579 or 8983557 to order a Cake Avenue cake. For appointments, call or text 0917-8952579.

NEW Cheesy Volcano

AN EXPLOSION OF 3 CHEESES BURSTING FROM THE CRUST!

MOZZARELLA
PROVOLONE
CHEDDAR



Get a free*

caesar salad OR 2 cream of mushroom soup OR upgrade to bottomless NESTEA Serenity green tea

*with an order of a Regular Cheesy Volcano Pizza & 2 glasses NESTEA Serenity green tea

Coupon will be given to Pizza Hut dine-in customers until May 15, 2006. Valid for dine-in transactions and redemption is until June 5, 2006. One coupon per transaction & not valid with any other promotion. Available at all Pizza Hut dine-in restaurants except Pizza Hut Bistro.